

The Vulnerable Authority of the Author of the Gospel of Mark. Re-Reading the Paradoxes

This article will proceed in three steps. After a presentation of the paradoxes in Mark 8,35; 9,35b and 10,43-44 within their context, I will emphasize how they serve as key texts for understanding the characterization of Jesus and I will argue that the literary device of paradox expresses in an unsurpassed way the vulnerability of the narrator who — in order to convince his readers of the truth of his message — has no other “proof” than the example of Jesus’ life leading to his tragic death. In this sense, the use of the literary device “paradox” is in harmony with the message of the evangelist: his only authority lies in the fate of the powerless man Jesus. Finally, by pointing out their “utopian” character, the critical ethical function of the paradoxes for both contemporary and actual readers will be explained.

I do not want to make a long digression into the theoretical background of the literary phenomenon of “paradox” and its application in the gospel of Mark. Since Robert M. Fowler wrote his chapters on “the rhetoric of indirection” and “moves of greater uncertainty” in *Let the Reader Understand* (1991)¹, the place and the literary function of paradox within the whole set of indirect communication devices is well known to Markan scholars. Paradox is where, “[o]f all Mark’s indirect moves, incongruity is at its sharpest”².

¹ R.M. FOWLER, *Let the Reader Understand*. Reader-Response Criticism and the Gospel of Mark (Augsburg 1991) 155-227; on paradox, see 184-194. The rhetorical strategies of indirection are irony, metaphor, paradox, ambiguity and opacity. These phenomena are not always easy to distinguish, because they all have in common the use of language which is not to be taken at face value. See also N.F. SANTOS, *Slave of All*. The Paradox of Authority and Servanthood in the Gospel of Mark (JSNTSS 237; Sheffield 2003) 1-16. On the place of paradox among other literary devices, see F. MERCIER-LECA, *L’ironie* (Ancreages; Paris 2003) 51-53.

² FOWLER, *Let the Reader Understand*, 185.

I. The paradoxes 8,35; 9,35b; 10,43-44 in their context

The rise of new literary criticism explains the growing consensus to approach the gospel of Mark as a whole as one great paradox. This is certainly one of the reasons why in recent years the idea has been advanced to call Mark a “master of surprise” (D. Juel), to characterize his gospel as “an évangile étonnant” (C. Focant), or to typify his theological narrative with the oxymoronic expression “obscure clarté” (Y. Bourquin)³. Mark’s gospel is indeed a surprising text that grips the readers or audience in a never ending way. Paradox — not only verbal but also dramatic paradox — seems to be Mark’s preferred literary expression by which he communicates and wants to stimulate the readers’ thinking. This is certainly the case in three paradoxical sayings which through their place in the gospel, their similar construction and their content can be considered together as one set: 8,35; 9,35b; 10,43-44⁴. It is amazing that the amount of literature on these related verses as a group is not extremely large, and the rise of narrative criticism has certainly stimulated the bringing together of them as a group of paradoxes⁵. This small

³ D.H. JUEL, *A Master of Surprise. Mark Interpreted* (Mifflintown PA, 2002); C. FOCANT, *Marc, un évangile étonnant* (BETL 194; Leuven 2006); Y. BOURQUIN, *Marc, une théologie de la fragilité. Obscure clarté d’une narration* (Le monde de la Bible 55; Genève: 2005). Note that these descriptions of the gospel of Mark make use of literary categories, which might be seen as a shift from the more theological ones given in the twentieth century: “book of secret epiphanies” (M. Dibelius), “mysterious revelation” (T.A. Burkill) or “Crucified Messiah” (N. Dahl), all three mentioned by FOWLER, *Let the Reader Understand*, 191.

⁴ FOWLER, *Let the Reader Understand*, 189, is right when he states that in the three *paradoxes* “we hear echoes of [the] daunting challenge” of 8,34.

⁵ For bibliographical references before 1990, see the index of gospel passages in F. NEIRYNCK et AL., *The Gospel of Mark. A Cumulative Bibliography 1950-1990* (BETL 102; Leuven 1992). More recently, see N.F. SANTOS, “The Paradox of Authority and Servanthood in the Gospel of Mark”, *Bibliotheca Sacra* 154 (1997) 452-460; ID., “Jesus’ Paradoxical Teaching in Mark 8:35; 9:35 and 10:43-44”, *Bibliotheca Sacra* 157 (2000) 15-25; ID., *Slave of All* (2003); especially with regard to Mark 10,43-44: F. VOUGA, *Politique du Nouveau Testament. Leçons contemporaines* (Genève 2008) 73-87: ‘L’ambivalence du pouvoir et la force de la faiblesse:

amount of literature is amazing for at least two reasons, firstly because even if it is possible that the literal wording of the sayings is not authentic, there is no doubt that at least the idea expressed in these paradoxes is “jesuanic”⁶; and secondly, because these verses are at the heart of the gospel, in the section 8,27–10,52, and they express the core of Jesus’ message in Mk. Let us have a closer look at these sayings.

1. *The first paradox (8,35)*

The first paradox (8,35), “probably an independent one originally”⁷, is about losing and finding one’s life: ὅς γὰρ ἐὰν θέλῃ τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ σῶσαι ἀπολέσει αὐτήν. ὅς δ’ ἂν ἀπολέσει τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ ἕνεκεν ἐμοῦ καὶ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου σώσει αὐτήν. The verse is part of a larger unit, which we can define from 8,34 till 8,38(-9,1). This unit comes right after the first passion and resurrection prediction (8,31). In this passage “[t]he sayings are bound together by catchwords, similarities or grammatical structure, and connections of thought”⁸. The construction of the verse itself is an example of antithetic parallelism, which intensifies the paradox.

Marc 10:35-45’; on Mark 8,35parr.: U. SCHMIDT, “Zum Paradox vom ‘Verlieren’ und ‘Finden’ des Lebens”, *Bib* 89 (2008) 329-351. — A similar remark was made by SANTOS, “Paradox”, 452 n. 2: “The few Marcan scholars who have discussed paradox have treated this issue [= authority and servanthood] in a generally cursory manner”.

⁶ Thus, e.g., with regard to Mk 8,35parr., SCHMIDT, “Paradox”, 330: “Trotz diverser zeitgeschichtlicher Parallelen, ist an der Echtheit des jesuanischen Wortes nicht zu zweifeln” (with reference to Bultmann, Crossan, Rebell). Many commentators mention the traditional character of (some of) the sayings. J.D. CROSSAN, *The Historical Jesus. The Life of a Mediterranean Jewish Peasant* (San Francisco, CA 1991) 353: “the original saying, as in the *Sayings Gospel Q* version, goes back to Jesus”. J.P. MEIER, *A Marginal Jew. Rethinking the Historical Jesus* (The Anchor Bible Reference Library; New York 1991) II, has only indirect references to this verse and to the other paradoxes.

⁷ A. YARBRO COLLINS, *Mark* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis 2007) 408.

⁸ R.H. GUNDRY, *Mark. A Commentary on His Apology for the Cross* (Grand Rapids, MI 1993) 434.

ὅς γὰρ ἐὰν θέλῃ τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ σῶσαι	ὅς δ' ἂν ἀπολέσει τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ
ἀπολέσει αὐτήν.	ἕνεκεν ἑμοῦ καὶ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου σώσει αὐτήν.

The question of the relationship of this verse with Q (or pre-Q?) is debated⁹. Mark 8,35 is the first of four γὰρ-sayings which justify the idea of denying oneself found in 8,34 (a.o. Focant, Gundry). And although the verse receives a metaphorical “translation” in vv. 36-37 (to gain the whole world, to forfeit one’s life, to give something in return for one’s life, to be ashamed of Jesus), it remains difficult to make very concrete what exactly “to save/lose one’s life” means. Though a more traditional interpretation would connect this saying and its context to the fate of death or martyrdom of Jesus’ disciples following Jesus, there are several arguments against thinking of “the shadow of death”, especially death by crucifixion, as the central issue¹⁰. The emphasis may not exclusively be on the recompense of suffering and death in this world in eternal life. As U. Schmidt has shown, this idea of death may be a later stage in the development of the paradox¹¹, but the more original

⁹ The verse plays a role in the so-called Mark-Q overlaps. The parallel verses are Mark 8,35 // Matt 16,25 // Luke 9,24 and Matt 10,38 // Luke 17,33 (= Q). See the critique on the Q-hypothesis for this verse by F. NEIRYNCK, “Recent Developments in the Study of Q”, in *Logia. Les paroles de Jésus – The Sayings of Jesus* (BETL 59; ed. J. DELOBEL; Leuven 1982) 29-75; = ID., *Evangelica II* (BETL 99; Louvain 1991) 409-464, esp. 426-431: “If Lk 17,33 is a rewriting of Mk 8,35, and there is no trace of Mt 10,39 in Lk 14,26-35, then the ‘Q-saying’ is attested only in Mt 10,39. Its connection with 10,38 can be the Matthaean editorial linking under the influence of Mk 8,(34-)-35” (431).

¹⁰ NEIRYNCK, “Recent Developments”, 435-436; SCHMIDT, “Paradox”, 351: “Es sollte deutlich geworden sein, dass das Paradoxon vom Verlieren und Finden der ψυχή nicht sofort und nicht hauptsächlich unter dem ‘Schatten des Todes’ zu lesen ist”.

¹¹ SCHMIDT, “Paradox”, 343-346. The idea of an eschatological compensation can be seen in the Beatitudes (Matthew 5,3-11; Luke 6,20-23; though the present tense in the beginning of the sayings and the Synoptic tradition as a whole “drängen darauf, dass sich diese Zusagen – zumindest teilweise – schon jetzt erfüllen” [344]), in the parable of the rich man and

one¹² — which is not to be left behind in the later interpretation — must be seen in the context and the spirit of Jesus' proclamation of the Kingdom of God and of his own life. After having studied the meaning of *ψυχή* throughout the Synoptic gospels, Schmidt concludes that the meaning of the paradox is originally related to life before death (*Diesseits*, “während der irdischen Existenz”). In the overall framework of the gospels, “losing life” means a conscious leaving behind of the traditional roads and certainties in order to search for the Kingdom of God. This “leaving behind” is a very concrete thing as is, e.g., shown in Matt 6,25-33 (v. 25: “Do not worry about your *ψυχή*, what you will eat and what you will drink” ... v. 33 // Luke 12,31: “But strive first for the kingdom of God”)¹³.

Of course, it cannot be denied that Mark's *ἐνεκεν ἐμοῦ* is a redactional addition (“either by Mark or at a pre-Markan stage”, A. Yarbro Collins), which adds a Christological connotation to the saying, but fits completely with some acts and words of Jesus¹⁴. In fact, most commentators agree that this Christological horizon is essential to the paradox and thus makes clear that the focus of the saying is to be found in the second part: Jesus' words, written by

Lazarus (Luke 12,16-21), in the passion predictions and in Mark 10,45 (// Matthew 20,28).

¹² According to SCHMIDT the original Q-version (see Matt 10,39) has forms of *εὐρίσκω* and the combination with *ψυχή* cannot mean “Zurückschrecken oder Ausweichen vor Todesgefahr”, but “ein engagiertes Mühen um die *ψυχή*” (“Paradox”, 333). But he adds that the same is true in the combination of *ψυχή* and *σῶζω*: in Mark 3,4, for instance, there is no relation with death (even if one would accept that the Markan version with *ἀποκτείνω* is more original than the Lukan *ἀπόλλυμι* in 6,9).

¹³ Santos, who applies the “transfiguration” method of R.M. Fowler to “translate” the verbal paradoxes into metaphors, analyses the immediate context of each paradox (8,35; 9,35; 10,43-44) and this results in very concrete indications about what “losing life” could mean in 8,35: “The desire to claim and cling to worldly authority (i.e., wishing to save one's life) is not profitable because it leads to the loss of one's soul to eternal ruin (i.e., losing one's life)” (“Jesus' Paradoxical Teaching”, 23). Hence the main theme in the paradoxes is “authority and servanthood” (but see below n. 28).

¹⁴ SCHMIDT, “Paradox”, 347: Jesus' sayings starting with “But I say to you...” (Matthew 5,22.28.32; ...) or with “For truly I tell you...” (Matthew 5,18; 6,2.5.16; ...) “und viele andere Indizien weisen darauf hin, dass schon zu Jesu Lebzeiten Worte gesprochen und Fakten geschaffen wurden, die eine Einfügung des *ἐνεκεν ἐμοῦ* unmittelbar nahe legten und hervorriefen”.

Mark, are meant to give life and not to destroy it: “those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it”. The order of the two clauses is very important. The tension between pre-paschal and post-paschal meaning created by this addition is minimal. The paradox expresses “une structure fondamentale de la foi tant avant qu’après Pâques”¹⁵. Such an interpretation is only possible within a more fundamental perspective on the theme of resurrection in the gospel of Mark. In fact, every saying and every act of Jesus expresses the idea of the paradox of the passion and the resurrection (cf. below), which “infiltrates” the whole gospel. With regard to the interpretation of the paradox, it is almost impossible to draw a line between the level of the “historical Jesus” and the “resurrected Jesus”. In this regard, it is interesting that most commentators now rightly notice that the audience is certainly broader than the group of the disciples¹⁶. And the introductory formula ὅς γὰρ ἐὰν..., ὅς δ’ αἶν... transcends the story level and appeals to the reader¹⁷.

I am not sure one has to “solve” the paradox, for example by understanding the word “life” in a double way, and interpreting it the first time as (losing) a “physical” life and the second time as (saving) a “spiritual” life, or the first time as (losing one’s) “earthly” or “present” life and the second time as (saving one’s) “eternal” or “future” life. I would prefer to leave the paradox as it stands, mysterious and not explicable by one single opposition. It is clear that the double paradox in both half-verses shows there is a clash of two perspectives, as presented in the untranslatable expression preceding this section: thinking τὰ τοῦ θεοῦ or τὰ τῶν ἀνθρώπων (8,33). It is also clear that at the crossroads of these two perspectives stands Jesus with his life, death and resurrection¹⁸. It is

¹⁵ FOCANT, *Marc*, 330.

¹⁶ FOCANT, *Marc*, 326: “... la foule ne doit pas être limitée au seul peuple d’Israël, mais inclure des païens. C’est donc tout homme indépendamment de ses origines ethniques qui est visé par cette convocation de Jésus et ses sentences sur la condition du disciple”.

¹⁷ FOWLER, *Let the Reader Understand*, 188-189.

¹⁸ For the paradoxes in Mark 8, 9 and 10 as a major example of the “standards of judgment for human behavior”, see D. RHOADS, “Losing Life for Others in the Face of Death: Mark’s Standards of Judgment”, *Interpr* 47 (1993) 258-269; = ID., *Reading Mark Engaging the Gospel* (Minneapolis 2004) 44-62. The idea is taken up by among others F.J. MATERA, *New Testament Ethics*. The

by losing one's life in following him that one will save one's life. Losing this life, however, does not start when death is approaching. It starts here and now in the reality of everyday life. Exactly how the reversal from losing to saving will happen is not clear¹⁹.

2. *The second paradox (9,35b)*

The second paradox (9,35b), probably like 8,35 originally an independent saying (Bultmann and others), is about being the first by being the last: (καὶ καθίσας ἐφώνησεν τοὺς δώδεκα καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς·) εἴ τις θέλει πρῶτος εἶναι ἔσται πάντων ἔσχατος καὶ πάντων διάκονος. The verse has a chiasmic construction ("first – to be" x "to be – last and servant") which emphasizes the contrast²⁰. It is part of the unit vv. 33-37 (starting with an argument about greatness, vv. 33-34), which is preceded by the second passion and resurrection prediction (9,31) and a remark on the incomprehension of the disciples (9,32).

εἴ τις θέλει		
πρῶτος	✕	ἔσται
εἶναι	✕	πάντων ἔσχατος καὶ πάντων διάκονος

This time the paradox is directed to the Twelve (v. 35a), but maybe we should not put too much emphasis on this and rather follow the suggestion of Adela Yarbro Collins that the "link [of "last of all"] with 8,34 suggests that the saying applies to all the followers of Jesus, not only to the leaders"²¹. She rightly sees in the mentioning of the Twelve that v. 35 is about "the style of leadership"²². Most commentators agree, while in slightly different wording, on this theme of the saying: "authority" (Santos), "la vraie grandeur" (Focant), "a matter of rank" (Gundry), "about rank and

Legacies of Jesus and Paul (Louisville KY, 1996) 22-23. (On standards of judgment, see also below).

¹⁹ Note that in 8,38 only the fate of those who will be ashamed is predicted. What will happen to those who are not ashamed is not told.

²⁰ GUNDRY, *Mark*, 509.

²¹ YARBRO COLLINS, *Mark*, 445.

²² YARBRO COLLINS, *Mark*, 444. Less probable is GUNDRY, *Mark*, 509: "to provide a numerical framework for the upcoming contrast between first and last, i.e. between first and twelfth".

status” (Donahue – Harrington²³). But what exactly is being taught by the paradox? Some elements of an answer follow in 9,36-51.

The first paradox is said after Peter is rebuked because he did not accept Jesus’ words about the passion. Peter, however, should not think he might have an exceptional position. He must think like “the crowd with his disciples” (8,34) and deny himself. The second paradox is said after the disciples argue with one another about who is the greatest (9,34: τίς μείζων), thus, again, manifesting that indeed they had not understood (v. 32) Jesus’ teaching about his passion (see their reaction of “silence” when Jesus asks them the subject of their discussion, v. 34). Though the word “great” (μέγας) is not repeated in v. 35 (but see further on, 10,43-44), the saying with “first” (like in 6,21 = leaders) and its opposites “last of all” and “servant of all” makes clear what is meant by the willingness to be great: striving to be the leader. After reading the extended form (compared to the first half-verse) no one can have any doubt: authority according to Jesus lies in serving all, without any compromise (ἔσται) and without any exception (repetition of πάντων)²⁴! The composition of the saying suggests a complete reversal of values: they should not even think about being the greatest, they should only serve. But even more than the second half-verse of the paradox, the example of Jesus’ taking apart a child (v. 36) and the subsequent explanation (v. 37) illustrate how the twelve should behave. Even if one accepts the interpretation that the saying is about “actual children” and about the “issue whether children ought to be welcomed as members of the community or welcomed at communal gathering”²⁵, this does not exclude a more

²³ J.R. DONAHUE – D.J. HARRINGTON, *The Gospel of Mark* (Sacra Pagina 2; Collegeville, KY 2002) 285.

²⁴ With δούκονος, the one who serves at the table stands for anyone who is serving the community (FOCANT, *Marc*, 357). — According to GUNDRY, *Mark*, 510, “all” “may not include people in general, for the passage deals with intramural rivalry among disciples”. But see the example of the child (9,36-37) and the conflict with the outsider driving out demons (9,38).

²⁵ YARBRO COLLINS, *Mark*, 445-446: the saying may be understood as an exhortation to Gentile converts or poor parents not to expose or kill their newborn children but to accept them. This interpretation is probably too specific within the Markan context. For a completely different but equally questionable explanation, that “believing adults will take the last place of a servant who receives even children who believe”, see GUNDRY, *Mark*, 510.

generally accepted symbolic reading in which children stand for “social nonentities” (Donahue – Harrington) or “les personnes insignifiantes dans la communauté” (Focant)²⁶.

It would lead us too far to comment in detail on the next pericope 9,38-40 (or 41?), about the stranger, i.e. non follower of Jesus, casting out demons in Jesus’ name, and how it contributes in its own manner to the interpretation of the paradox in 9,35b²⁷. In summary we can say that the paradoxical teaching of Jesus about serving contains two components: (1) receiving children and insignificant people, and (2) accepting the good actions of non-members of the community. More than in the first paradox we find very concrete suggestions about how to live. One could say that 9,35 is a reversal of the cultural values of Jesus’ time about authority and that it offers another concrete criterion for what it means to lose your life (8,35)²⁸. As in the first paradox (“to save your life”), there is no concrete description of how the conditional clause (εἰ τις θέλει πρῶτος εἶναι) will be realized. The emphasis is on the second part: one has to serve²⁹. And, as in the first paradox, the foundation for why one should serve this way is found in Jesus himself, as can be seen in 9,37 and 9,38.39.41 (in your name, in my name, because you bear the name of Christ).

²⁶ For more similar interpretations, see SANTOS, “Jesus’ Paradoxical Teaching”, 21-22.

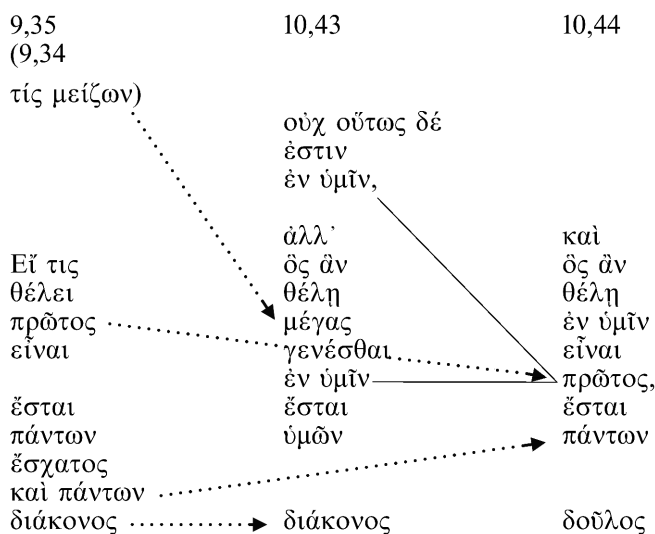
²⁷ Many commentators see a strong or a weak link between the pericope and the theme of the paradox in 9,35b. SANTOS, “Jesus’ Paradoxical Teaching”, has a very clear position: “Jesus’ vindication of the unknown exorcist reinforces the need to receive or welcome others. This corrective teaching of Jesus transforms ‘receiving a child’ into ‘not hindering a stranger’ who also does the work of God. ... The basis of this acceptance, which links the two expressions of ‘receiving a child’ and ‘not hindering a stranger’, is the commonality of doing so ‘in the name of Jesus’ (i.e., under His authority and will). Thus the act of receiving a child and the act of exorcizing are both to be done in Jesus’ name” (22).

²⁸ SANTOS, “Jesus’ Paradoxical Teaching”, 23. As mentioned before, he recognizes this theme of authority also in 8,35, but I think it is more appropriate to apply it to 9,35 and 10,43-44.

²⁹ There is no mentioning of any “reward” for those who will be servant of all. In 9,41 the word μισθός (hapax in Mk) is used for those who give a cup of water to the disciples. And in 9,42-48 there follows a description of the punishments for negative behavior.

3. The third paradox (10,43-44)

The third paradox (10,43-44) is an example of a double paradoxical saying. It has a synonymous parallel structure, which is clearly illustrated by the synoptic comparison between v. 43 and v. 44 below. The differences between the verses are very small. We see an inversion (compare μέγας γενέσθαι ἐν ὑμῖν and ἐν ὑμῖν εἶναι πρῶτος) and a shift from ὑμῶν διάκονος to πάντων δοῦλος. A comparison with 9,(34-)35 seems unavoidable, because one notices the influence on v. 43 (“great”, “servant”) and on v. 44 (“first”, “of all”):



The different parts of the paradoxical sayings in vv. 43-44 are arranged in a rather surprising way. Over against “great” one does not find “small” but “servant” (διάκονος), and over against “first” (πρῶτος) one does not find “last” (like in 9,35) but “slave” (δοῦλος). The alternation of double sayings (8,35; 10,43-44) and single saying (9,35), the repetition with variation of 9,35 in 10,43-44, and the internal structure and vocabulary of the verses are not only evidence for the sense of creative variation of the narrator. All together these sayings are working towards a climax³⁰: from

³⁰ YARBRO COLLINS, *Mark*, 495, 498, writes that the request of the two

servant to slave, from “of you to “of all”. We already knew that “great” and “first” stand for “important”, “with authority”, “powerful”. The final word δοῦλος gives a stronger emphasis on the two opposite elements of the paradox. The reader who has read the preceding paradox in 9,35 within its context has enough information to understand the meaning of 10,43-44, but the context of chapter 10 gives this interpretation even more nuances.

Mark 10,43-44, integrated in the pericope 10,35-45, is found once again right after a passion and resurrection announcement. It is about the “ambivalence of power”, to use the words of François Vouga³¹. There are two sections. The pericope starts with a dialogue between James and John on the one side and Jesus on the other (10,35-40), on account of their request to sit at Jesus’ right and left in the glorious Kingdom (10,37). This conversation is not about a “simple” opposition between the perverted exercise of power and Jesus’ plea for service. Even Jesus recognizes that the two disciples are willing to drink the cup he will have to drink, which means that they are capable of suffering like he will do (cf. 14,36). There is more, and Jesus simply refuses to do what they are asking. While James and John are asking “Grant us to sit...” (v. 37), Jesus answers: “[this] is not mine to grant” (v. 40). What Jesus is suggesting here is a more radical change in their life, since they are displaying a wrong basic attitude aimed at remuneration and reward for themselves³². Jesus is more revolutionary: you either serve — without any footnote — or you do not! The question of reward is not on the agenda. Nobody is capable of deciding for oneself or for anybody else if anything will be given, and what that will be. The kingdom of God cannot be bought, not even by serving (Vouga). Honor and approval, if any, are a gift. Even more explicitly than in the first two paradoxes, the concern should not be greatness anyway.

disciples “constitutes the climactic example of the disciples’ misunderstanding” and that Jesus’ answer is “the climactic saying” of the unit 10,42-45, which reprises and resumes the first two in ch. 8 and ch. 9.

³¹ VOUGA, *Politique*, 73. Some of the ideas below are found in this chapter of his book (73-87). See also A. DE MINGO KAMINOUCI, ‘*But It Is Not So Among You*’. Echoes of Power in Mark 10.42-45 (JSNTSS 249; London – New York 2003), esp. 116-155 (Mark 10,41-45).

³² VOUGA, *Politique*, 77: “Le dialogue ne distingue pas service et recherche du pouvoir, mais deux attitudes de service et de relation au pouvoir.”

Once more, the only thing Jesus demands is service. It is “power as service” and nothing else³³. These words of Jesus are not easy to accept, and demand more explanation³⁴. The explanation follows in the subsequent monologue in which Jesus teaches the disciples about the meaning of power (10,41-45).

In his teaching, Jesus shifts the theme from heaven back to the earthly reality³⁵. These instructions for the disciples function as a kind of “community rule”³⁶. The rule is given to the Twelve (ten plus two) and contains a criterion for insiders of the community (triple emphasis on ἐν ὑμῖν). The human relationships within the community must be different compared to the ones of those “among the Gentiles” who rule the world. Note the ironic nuances in the formulation of v. 42 (οἱ δοκοῦντες ἄρχειν), which draws attention to the fact that the rulers themselves think they rule³⁷. This is not a neutral description of their hierarchical position but an ironical statement. They might have the power, but they only seem to control the world. And Vouga adds a second form of critique: external power does not imply control over the spiritual freedom of their subjects.

Over against the tendencies of the world, Jesus does not immediately recommend the opposite attitude among his followers. He first observes – note the indicative present in v. 43a οὐχ οὕτως δέ ἐστιν ἐν ὑμῖν — that there exists another logic that does not allow for any form of compromise with the attitude of the rulers of the world. Authentic followers of Jesus believe in a different way of behaving. They withdraw from the dominant systems because they do not seem to belong to them. They do not urge for human

³³ See the title of an article by J. LAMBRECHT, “Power as Service”, *Louvain Studies* 12 (1987) 54-61. Or should one say “Service as Power”?

³⁴ The saying in v. 40 “prepares for the further instruction that is to come in vv. 41-45” (YARBRO COLLINS, *Mark*, 498).

³⁵ See, among others, FOCANT, *Marc*, 398.

³⁶ FOCANT, *Marc*, 398: “la règle communautaire”; 400: “règles de la communauté” (with reference to Bultmann).

³⁷ So say, e.g., FOCANT, *Marc*, 398 and VOUGA, *Politique*, 79; but not Yarbrow Collins, who sees it as “a term of honor and contain[ing] no hint of depreciation” (*Mark*, 499). For an overview of the most important positions and an interpretation in favor of irony, see DE MINGO KAMINOUCI, “‘But It Is Not So Among You’”, 118-123: “Mark’s intention in using the term δοκοῦντες is first and foremost to make the reader wonder” (123).

dominance. They do not keep records of the amount of service they have to perform in order to sit at the right hand in God's glory. This perspective is the starting point for Jesus. Within this framework he would like to bring the disciples to a new way of thinking. He is not saying that they will not have a place in the future glory, but he criticizes them for not having entered into his paradoxical way of thinking and living yet: serving should not be done with a view to one's own profit ("not to be self-aggrandizing and self-serving"³⁸), but with a view to every other person whom one is serving. The paradox is very subtle: anyone who wants to be "great" or "first" (a leader) in the community will have to serve, but in so doing he will not be "great" or "first" in the eyes of the world, since there other rules are applicable³⁹.

4. *The context of a passion and resurrection prediction*

Jesus' teaching does not stop with the paradoxes. As in the first two cases, we find the same composition: his sayings are integrated into a Christological framework. "For the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many" (10,45). Here, unlike 9,36-37, it is not a concrete example of Jesus that is mentioned as the basis for the validation of the paradox, but the example of his whole life. He gives his life in order to free people. Whatever the exact interpretation of 10,45⁴⁰, in the context

³⁸ YARBRO COLLINS, *Mark*, 499. She also compares the paradox to other biblical texts (1 Kgs 12,7) and she gives several examples to illustrate that Jesus' teaching in vv. 41-45 is "similar to widely expressed Greek and Roman ideals of leadership". FOCANT, *Marc*, 402, for his part, is rather critical: "En fait, le texte de Marc est fort différent de toutes ces traditions".

³⁹ DE MINGO KAMINOCHI, "'But It Is Not So Among You'", 132: "The second of the sayings in Mk10.42-45 is a commandment addressed to those aspiring to become leaders among Jesus' disciples. They are ordered to serve and to become 'slaves of all'. This saying is not a recommendation of kindness towards fellow disciples. It stands in contrast with the description of the abuse of power of the rulers in Mk 10.42b. It is a commandment to engage in subversive practices of power. With their renunciation of domination and their willingness to become 'servants' and 'slaves of all', these leaders should promote a community of discipleship that stands as an alternative to the structures of power of their world".

⁴⁰ To summarize the endless debates about the interpretation of λῦτρον ἀντὶ πολλῶν in v. 45 is an impossible task. Apart from the explanations found

of Mark 10,35-45 this verse “provides both a warrant and a model for the teaching expressed in vv. 43-44”⁴¹. The motivation in v. 45 is the perfect illustration of what Jesus means about the value of serving. In serving, the Son of man — who does deserve all honor — does not gain anything for himself, and Jesus indicates the most extreme consequences of this philosophy. In an unlimited and inimitable way (read again 8,36-37), he gives his life for the salvation of other people, not for himself⁴².

in the commentaries on Mk, we can mention, among many titles, the following studies on the verse (alphabetically): K. BACKHAUS, “‘Lösepreis für viele’. Zur Heilsbedeutung des Todes Jesu bei Markus”, *Der Evangelist als Theologe* (ed. T. SÖDING) (Stuttgarter Bibelstudien 163; Stuttgart 1995) 91-118; J. BECKER, “Die neutestamentliche Rede vom Sühnetod Jesu”, *ZThK Beiheft* 8 (1990) 29-49, = ID., *Annäherungen. Zur urchristlichen Theologiegeschichte und zum Umgang mit ihren Quellen. Ausgewählte Aufsätze zum 60. Geburtstag* (ed. U. MELL) (BZNW 76; Berlin 1995) 334-354; A. YARBRO COLLINS, “The Signification of Mark 10:45 among Gentile Christians”, *HTR* 90 (1997) 371-382; K. KERTELGE, “Der dienende Menschensohn (Mk 10,45)”, *Jesus und der Menschensohn*. FS A. Vögtle (eds. R. PESCH – R. SCHNACKENBURG – O. KAISER) (Freiburg 1975) 225-239; S. MCKNIGHT, “Jesus and His Death: Some Recent Scholarship”, *Currents in Research* 9 (2001) 185-228; R. RIESNER, “Back to the Historical Jesus through Paul and his School (The Ransom Logion – Mark 10.45; Matthew 20.28)”, *Journal for the Study of the Historical Jesus* 1 (2003) 171-199; O. SCHWANKL, “Machtwille und Dienstbereitschaft. Zur Jüngerbelehrung in Mk 10,35-45”, *Forschungen zum Neuen Testament und seiner Umwelt*. FS A. Fuchs (ed. C. NIEMAND) (Linzer Philosophisch-Theologische Beiträge 7; Frankfurt am Main 2002) 235-258; D. SEELEY, “Rulership and Service in Mark 10:41-45”, *NovT* 35 (1993) 234-250; A. SCHENKER, “Substitution du châtement ou prix de la paix? Mc 10,45 par.”, *La Pâque du Christ*. FS. F.-X. Durwell (LD 112; Paris 1982) 75-90; D. VIEWEGER – A. BÖCKLER, “‘Ich gebe Ägypten als Lösegeld für dich’. Mk 10,45 und die jüdische Tradition zu Jes 43,3b-4, *ZAW* 108 (1996) 594-607; W. ZAGER, “Wie kam es im Urchristentum zur Deutung des Todes Jesu als Sühnegeschehen? Eine Auseinandersetzung mit Peter Stuhlmachers Entwurf einer ‘Biblischen Theologie des Neuen Testaments’”, *ZNW* 87 (1996) 165-186. — One of the difficult issues is if there is any influence of Isaiah 53,10-12 on this verse. When considering the literature on this topic, I think it is far too simplistic to conclude that the alternative ‘Isaiah 53 or not’ is only decided on the basis of exegetical discussions. The answer to that discussion seems to be also influenced by the scholars’ references to other background literature, their assessment of the historical authenticity, and their use of their theological tradition and interpretative language (sacrifice).

⁴¹ YARBRO COLLINS, *Mark*, 499.

⁴² The unique way of serving by Jesus has been noticed by several scholars.

In fact, we have here a way of being which illustrates the heart of the gospel. Once again, we notice that if the paradox is linked to the theme of the cross, this does not restrict the meaning of the saying to crucifixion or martyrdom. The paradox offers a code with regard to human relationships in everyday life within the community. Starting with Peter's "confession", the disciples never stop struggling with these thoughts of Jesus. The reason why they repeatedly do not understand is now clear: each time when the message about the passion is announced, the reader learns that Jesus then has to teach the disciples a lesson about losing one's life and serving in daily life.

In summary, each of the three paradoxes are set in the context of a passion and resurrection prediction and a moment of the disciples' failure to understand these announcements. Yet, through the teaching given by Jesus they learn that his passion is merely the consequence of a certain perspective on life, which can only be expressed in a paradoxical way. One should not wait until persecution or crucifixion comes to experience how these paradoxes might function. They are to be lived here and now. Just before the third passion and resurrection announcement (10,32-34) and after the encounter with the rich young man (10,17-27), Jesus gives another teaching (10,[28]29-31) to Peter (and the other disciples)⁴³. This is another concrete example of how losing one's life leads to saving it. One recognizes the same characteristics as noted above: general character ("there is no one..."), Christological framework ("for my sake and for the sake of the good news"), everyday life (houses, brothers and sisters, ...). And it ends with a paradoxical saying (v. 31) that functions as an encouragement and as a warning to the disciples: "But many who are first will be last, and the last will be first". The paradoxes are not only anticipations of the

See for instance SCHMIDT, "Paradox", 346: "Während in diesem Logion [10,44] gewissermassen von einem Gewinn für denjenigen die Rede ist, der die Sorge um seine ψυχή aufgibt, so fehlt dieses Moment in Mt 20,28; Mk 10,45: Hier gewinnt der sich Hingebende nichts für sich, sondern ausschliesslich etwas für die anderen bzw. für 'viele'". See also GUNDRY, *Mark*, 589: "'To give his life...' specifies the kind of service he [Jesus] will perform. It need not imply that the Twelve will perform the same kind".

⁴³ One could almost discover a sandwich structure in 10,28-31/32-34/35-45. Jesus' passion prediction is framed by two scenes in which disciples are thinking they have privileges.

themes of the cross and resurrection, they are also actualizations of that theme in the concrete life of Jesus' followers.

II. Paradox as criterion and the vulnerable authority of the narrator

We have already mentioned how the paradoxical teaching of Jesus in the three paradoxes functions as a standard of judgment for the reader. The reader finds a criterion to judge the characters in the gospel, their actions and thoughts and their conflicts. It may sound a little bit awkward, but the first character who falls under the judgment of the paradoxes is Jesus himself⁴⁴. As a matter of fact, the challenge here is to see if the narrator has successfully presented Jesus as a trustworthy character, i.e. as a person whose words and deeds are consistent. Does the reader have the impression that Jesus serves, that he is the last one and the slave of all, that he loses his life? The answer is positive. In Markan exegesis it has always been emphasized that this is especially the case when the reader reaches the passion story and sees how the "promises" leading to Jesus' death are "fulfilled" in the story. As the second part of the gospel is focused on the theme of the passion, it is obvious that in this part we will find the climax of Jesus' own experience of the verbal paradoxes. Indeed, it is clear that Jesus' passion is presented as a kind of fulfillment of one half of the paradoxes: losing one's life, being last, servant of all. Biblical scholars are familiar with seeing this one aspect of the paradox in Mark's gospel (the famous *theologia crucis*, sometimes seen as a correction of the *theologia gloriae*). But what about the tension in the paradox, created by the other half? What about "he will save his life", "he will be great", "he will be first"? We have seen that in the three paradoxes these first parts are each time expressed in a clause with the form of εἰ τις — ὃς ἀν θέλη⁴⁵, but that the exact content of these intentions is

⁴⁴ We will limit ourselves here to the protagonist Jesus, but it might be clear that in the end, the criterion proposed by Jesus leads to conflict with several groups in the gospel. See (for instance) J.D. KINGSBURY, *Conflict in Mark*. Jesus, Authorities, Disciples (Minneapolis, MN 1989).

On the significance of the paradoxes for the first half of the gospel, see below (3 c).

⁴⁵ LAMBRECHT, "Power as Service", 57, mentions a shift from the most primitive version of the saying in which Jesus addresses his words to people

not situated at the surface level of the story or, at least, that the Markan Jesus does not explicitly mention it. One spontaneously feels that there are two types of “greatness” and that one — the one that is acknowledged by the world (10,42) — is false. But what about the “real” greatness?

There is only one aspect in the story which orientates the reader towards an answer to the question of how the result of the paradoxes might be realized in a positive way. That aspect is the relationship of Jesus to God. It is a basic line and a fundamental cornerstone of Mark's story. Without this basic line the whole story loses its dynamics, its sense and its suspense. It is, of course, well known that in Mark's story there is an almost transparent veil covering the relationship of Jesus and his God. No human being in the Markan story recognizes the true dimension and the consequences of this relationship. And the narrator invites the readers to explore the text and to read between the lines, until they find the key to understanding the mystery (which does not imply that the exploration ever comes to an end!). It has therefore rightly been suggested in a recent article to call this endlessly surprising⁴⁶ Christology “mystical”⁴⁷ (although I would like to call it “practical”

who are already great and powerful. By adding the verb θέλω, Mark changes this into “a program for life: in case you want to be great”. Mark is thinking of the “numerous ‘little’ Christians in his community, of the power structures which unavoidably developed even in these circumstances” and of “the numerous occasions for service which exist wherever people live together” (58).

⁴⁶ I have already mentioned Donald H. JUEL, *A Master of Surprise*, but it would be interesting to re-read the plot of the Gospel of Mark from the perspective of the interaction and the tension created between the categories of “curiosity” and “surprise” as it is presented in R. BARONI, *La tension narrative*. Suspense, curiosité et surprise (Poétique; Paris 2007).

⁴⁷ On the interpretation of the ‘messianic secret’ from a reader perspective, see C. FOCANT, “Une christologie de type ‘mystique’ (Marc 1.1-16.8)”, *NTS* 55 (2009) 1-21. The idea of a kind of equation between disciple and reader can be illustrated in this quotation: “S’il entre dans la condition de disciple, le lecteur peut aussi recevoir le don du mystère, y être éveillé. À la fin de Mc, une porte est ouverte sur l’avenir à travers l’annonce que le crucifié ressuscité précède les disciples et Pierre en Galilée (16,7). La possibilité d’un rebondissement est ainsi ouverte. Mais cette éventualité sort du cadre du récit. Elle est donc laissée à la libre interprétation du lecteur. Tout a été mis en place pour que ce dernier remette en question sa propre compréhension et reste, comme disciple, dans un état de veille permanent. Il perçoit combien Jésus et le Règne qu’il annonce

at the same time⁴⁸). And it is this paradoxical dimension of the characterization of Jesus himself (as the suffering Son of God) which shines its light on the paradoxes and helps the reader to understand the tension and the unity of the two parts within each paradox: in the first place, Jesus is a trustworthy character because he fulfils his own words about losing one's life and becoming the slave of all. In the second place, in doing so he is not asking any greatness for himself, but is manifesting complete trust in God who is the only one who can fulfill the other half of the paradox and make Jesus to be the first and the greatest. Therefore, the real denouement of Mark's story is the empty tomb story, in which the young man dressed in white proclaims: "He is risen. He is not here". As short as it is, it is a victorious sentence⁴⁹ that gives sense to the verbal paradoxes in 8,35; 9,35b and 10,43-44 in a double way. (a) In a very condensed way, they thus become the illustration of the Christological paradox as a whole: God is on the side of the Crucified Man from Nazareth. The real greatness of Jesus lies in his being great in the eyes of God. (b) Because of Jesus' resurrection, the "wisdom" of the paradoxes is not a call for absurdity or for masochism. It should not be overlooked that the three paradoxes each follow announcements of the passion and resurrection.

The Markan Jesus asks the disciples — and through them the other followers and readers — to share the same perspective as well. What does Jesus, and Mark, promise them? Nothing else than to be

sont insaisissables. Nul ne peut épuiser la connaissance de Jésus; son identité échappe à toute prise" (FOCANT, "Une christologie", 20).

⁴⁸ Although FOCANT, "Une christologie ", 19 (*italics mine*) does not use the word "practical", it is clear that "mysticism" should not only be understood at a spiritual level. It has, on the contrary, very concrete consequences for the reader: "L'interprétation que je propose est très proche d'une christologie de l'étonnement propre à déstabiliser le lecteur de toute certitude trop facile, tout en le stimulant à percer le mystère de ce personnage fascinant et énigmatique non de manière intellectuelle, *mais en le suivant sur le chemin*".

⁴⁹ For the reader, this "resurrection" message which clearly turns the outcome of the story upside down does not come as a surprise. Jesus had announced it three times together with his passion (and see also 9,9-10; 14,28). One should rather be surprised about other things at the story level, such as the lack of interest of the disciples in asking Jesus for an explanation about his resurrection, or the shortness of the empty tomb story and the lack of appearances, or the silence and fear of the women. But these elements contribute as well to the mystical character of the gospel.

saved by God. That is the only guarantee that should and could make them decide to follow Jesus. Therefore, according to Mark, the Christological dimension is an indispensably intrinsic part of the paradoxes. What Jan Lambrecht writes regarding 9,35-37, is true for all paradoxes: "Clearly, this is an interpersonal, horizontal task. It is, however, motivated vertically. By serving our neighbor we serve Christ and God Himself!" And so we could conclude: He who wants to be great in the eyes of God, must be the slave of all.

This article is entitled "The vulnerable authority of the author of Mark". It has been said many times before: the narrator of the Gospel according to Mark has an Olympic perspective on the events and characters of his story. He is the one who knows everything and who chooses to tell what he likes in the way he wishes to tell it. He is the master of his story. The consequence of this statement is enormous, since through this perspective the narrator can influence the reading process in order to orientate the thoughts and the actions of the reader. There is nothing special or surprising about this position. The reason for this is that the kind of "proclaiming" or "missionary" literature that the gospels represent demands an author who manifests some authority in order to be convincing. The power and the authority he has as an omniscient writer becomes apparent when the reader discovers the rhetoric of the narrator. This "discovery" by the reader of the rhetoric strategies and their manifold techniques does not make the authority of the author weaker, as if the exposure of his artistry would undermine the value of his work. On the contrary, one could compare the attentive reading of a text to the fascination of someone who is viewing a piece of art. A better understanding of the techniques and the nuances used by the artist does not lead to a demystification of the masterpiece. It rather leads to a deeper appreciation and admiration of what they want to express. Better insight into the creation and the formation of a text or piece of art can help one to see the values, the ideas, the perspective or the message that the author or artist wants to bring forward. The reader — to leave the comparison with other art behind us and to limit ourselves to the text of the gospels — who has a better insight into the techniques used by the author, will be better prepared to accept (or to refuse) the evidence brought forward by the narrator. Rhetoric artistry helps to construct the authority of the narrator. But, the narrator also has a message he wants to transmit. And there Mark finds himself in the same paradoxical situation as

his protagonist Jesus⁵⁰: although master of his work, in the end Mark does not have any other valid argumentation for his message than the story of Jesus himself, which is a paradox in itself. Because God has shown himself, through Jesus, to be a God who is on the side of the “last and the servant of all”, the readers should take the risk of experiencing the same paradoxes without any other “certainty” than the promise that Jesus will be with them (as he once was with the disciples). Mark’s authority is very fragile since he places himself in a precarious and vulnerable position. In proclaiming his good news (*eu-aggelion*) he faces the same danger of incomprehension by his audience as Jesus once faced. Through his story, Mark delivers himself to the readers.

III. The paradoxes of 8,35; 9,35b and 10,43-44 and the modern reader

Because of their connection with the daily reality of the readers on the one hand and with the role of Christ on the other hand, the paradoxes are a perfect synthesis of the double focus that is at the heart of Mark’s Gospel. The hermeneutical construction of the Gospel of Mark could indeed be compared to an ellipse with two foci, more specifically a Christological center and a reader oriented center. In these concluding remarks I want to add some (personal) reflections about the possible effect of the paradoxes on modern readers. How do these paradoxes create tensions even today? These reflections surpass mere considerations of exegesis, but we have just noticed in the paradoxes the narrator’s attempt to involve in a

⁵⁰ Many aspects of the way Mark shapes his story are meant to support this authority. In the context of the theme of this article one can think especially of the characterization of the protagonist Jesus, who himself manifests authority as Son of God, Son of Man and Messiah. It is well known that the narrator and Jesus share the same perspective. Just as the idea of the authority of the author is linked to the idea of the authority of Jesus, the vulnerability of the author as well is linked to the vulnerability of Jesus, the main person in the story. Authority and fragility seem to be both sides of the picture, of which ‘the fragile side’ is seldom emphasized. I think this combination of authority and vulnerability is at the heart of the gospel message itself. Mark stood before an almost impossible task. He wanted to write a story about the powerful authority of Jesus as Son of God but this authoritative Jesus proclaimed that one should become the last and the servant of all. How could he reconcile both ideas?

unique way the readers of his gospel. One could simply say that the paradoxes do not only function as a criterion for the reader to judge the characters. They are equally a standard of judgment for the readers themselves! “Paradoxes are a reminder to the reader that the orientation suggested by the author opposes normal and reasonable thoughts and expectations at any point”⁵¹. It is typical for the paradoxical language of Jesus that these new values are expressed in simple and well known words that are given a completely new meaning. This new meaning is meant to confuse readers, old and new ones⁵². Words do not mean what they stand for. Accepted associations connected with simple words of the Jewish-Hellenistic milieu must make way for new interpretations. One could think, for instance, of ἐξουσία, ἀδελφοί, μέγας. It is remarkable how ordinary words, when framed in the story of Jesus, become the language of mystery and resurrection. The simplicity of the words is in harmony with the intention of the narrator to convince the audience to accept the system of values of the Kingdom of God as proclaimed by Jesus.

1. *The continuous paradoxical situation of the reader*

We have noticed the fact that the first, and most probably also the second, of the paradoxes are addressed to a wide audience, at least wider than the group of the Twelve. We noticed as well that all the paradoxes have a very general formulation, while 10,43-44 is clearly focused on a particular kind of behavior within the group of disciples or the Twelve. As such, this creates a double interest of the paradoxes: they appeal to the responsibility of each individual person and they express a collective task. With regard to the practical feasibility of the paradoxes, the importance of this

⁵¹ BOURQUIN, *Marc*, 93: “Le paradoxe rappelle le lecteur que la direction suggérée par l’auteur s’oppose, en tout point, à ce que les gens estiment normal et raisonnable”; see pp. 93-95 on paradoxes.

⁵² D. MARGUERAT, “La construction du lecteur par le texte (Marc et Matthieu)”, *The Synoptic Gospels* (ed. C. FOCANT) (BETL 110; Louvain 1993) 239-262, offers a very adequate description of how through his “theology of paradox” (258, n. 57) Mark disorients and re-orientates his readers who have to learn the “vulnerability of all knowledge” (256). It is the narrator’s conviction that believers should leave behind any kind of privilege or prestige (258).

communitarian aspect seems somewhat underestimated. Most of the time one thinks in terms of individuality when serving and becoming last are concerned. Each individual person should decide for themselves what the paradoxes mean. And rightly so; the personal dimension of freedom and responsibility should never be excluded from one's actions. But does not Mark's text contain also the idea that service in the spirit of Jesus should be realized within a group of people who are all trying to live according to these principles? According to Mark, Jesus wants to create a new "family" of people who do the will of God (3,35). Unfortunately, within the Gospel of Mark this does not seem to be very successful. The personal stories of the disciples are a failure in that they do not correspond to what Jesus demands: Peter denies Jesus, James and John do not understand him, Judas betrays him. And as a group they are not able to behave according to Jesus' expectations: they fall asleep instead of keeping awake one hour when "the hour has come" (14,32-42), and "all of them deserted him and fled" (14,50). The reader could start wondering if the disciples' incomprehension, manifested through their thoughts and through their actions, is actually one of the reasons for the failure (at a human level) of Jesus' personal project! According to Mark's story line, Jesus did not succeed during his lifetime to create a community that lived in accordance with the rules of his teaching. One could imagine a completely different story if Jesus had succeeded in doing so. It would not have been the story of the failure of a group of people, but a witness to the force of an alternative way of life. The Markan story of the paradox of Jesus' message and life is a tragic one. He dies in loneliness, aware that his disciples have abandoned him, despite his promises to be with them whenever they take care of the "children" or when they serve the last ones. By living in accordance with Jesus' paradoxical teaching, the followers of Jesus will experience his presence (despite his physical absence). And thus, if one goes beyond the boundaries of the story told by Mark, another paradox — a historical one — appears: after Jesus' lonely death a new religious movement of people begins, a movement in which the message that was not understood during his lifetime, is transmitted. Without entering into concrete ethical guidelines for today, one can say that this historical paradox is repeated each time people today read or hear Mark's gospel, and especially the paradoxes. Just like the disciples, contemporary readers, as a group and as individuals,

are continuously challenged to enter into the mystery of Jesus' death and resurrection⁵³. How? By losing their lives and by serving all. In trying to do so, another paradox could become an interesting guideline. It is found in 9,24b: "I believe, help my unbelief!" and it contains the reaction of the father of the epileptic boy to Jesus' words "All things can be done for the one who believes" (9,23b). The Markan Jesus' paradoxical teaching demands a paradoxical answer by the reader⁵⁴.

2. The link between Jesus Christ and the paradoxes: a theological challenge

We have seen that the personal fate of Jesus himself is inextricably linked to a full understanding of the paradoxes. The teaching in the paradoxes is not a marginal note of Jesus' preaching. On the contrary, the verses are all the more a challenge because Jesus' whole life is involved. Thus, for example, one cannot dissociate 10,45 from the teaching in vv. 43-44. The connection of 10,43-44 to 10,45 has a double function. First, Jesus' life becomes a model to follow. In a unique way he has shown what it means to serve. Serving and being the slave of all can imply the gift of one's life for others. But those who wish to be disciples should not be frightened by this implication. Because,

⁵³ It would be interesting from a reader response criticism to compare the function of the open end of Mark's gospel with the open form of the paradoxes. Just as the silence of the women and their disobedience vis-à-vis the command of the young man at the end of the gospel (16,7-8) is an appeal to the reader to complete the story, the incomprehension of the disciples and their failure to understand Jesus' paradoxical teaching is a mirror for the reader to do better.

⁵⁴ The role of the short dialogue for the understanding of Mark's gospel has rightly been emphasized by S. ALKIER, *Die Realität der Auferweckung in, nach und mit den Schriften des Neuen Testaments* (Neutestamentliche Entwürfe zur Theologie 12; Basel – Tübingen 2005) 98-99: "Die emotionale Reaktion des Vaters [...] schreit die Unfähigkeit der Selbstkonstituierung des Glaubens aus und er gibt sich vertrauensvoll und ängstlich zugleich in die Hand Jesu. [...] Zielt das Markusevangelium auf eine Lektüre, die zum Glauben führen soll, der dazu befähigt in der Nachfolge Jesu den je eigenen Kreuzesweg zu gehen, getragen von der Hoffnung, auf diese Weise zum Leben zu gelangen, dann ist der verzweifelte Vater, der die Unmöglichkeit der Selbstabsicherung des Glaubens emotional spürt und zum Ausdruck bringt, das Modell des Glaubens im Markusevangelium".

secondly, the Christological interpretation is also a support and a guarantee to encourage the disciples to follow in the footsteps of Jesus⁵⁵. In becoming a slave, the Son of Man will receive all honor. We can repeat what we said before: remember that the “passion predictions” (8,31; 9,31; 10,33-34) include a prediction of the resurrection.

Nonetheless, however much this link between the paradoxes and Jesus’ fate is true from an exegetical and theological perspective, it will remain a difficult issue for actual readers. Notwithstanding different theological traditions about atonement and redemption, which try to make sense of the unique theological position of Jesus and to interpret Jesus’ life as more than a simple model to imitate, the question of how what happened to Jesus stands in relationship to our daily life will always be a puzzling challenge. The paradoxes thus lead us into the heart of Christian belief itself; i.e., into the significance of Jesus himself. They lead us to ask questions like these: How does Jesus’ death and resurrection have an effect on people’s choice of values? Or what about those people who consciously or unconsciously keep distance from Christian belief: can the paradoxes make any sense to them? And what is an adequate hermeneutic to talk about the resurrection today? When does the resurrection as a symbol of new life become a tangible reality in the lives of people? In the language of the paradoxes: is it possible to experience what it means to be great in the eyes of God while one is being the last of all, knowing that a theology of “reward” or “compensation” after death is difficult to accept at the beginning of the twenty-first century?

3. The double function of the paradoxes: appeal and hope

This leads me to a brief third and last reflection provoked by the exegesis of the paradoxes in Mark. We have emphasized that the paradoxes are to be lived in daily reality. But it is inevitable that the concrete and practical consequences of these words depend on the

⁵⁵ É. CUVILLIER, “La résurrection dans l’évangile de Marc ou: La finale courte... et puis avant?”, in *Quand la Bible se raconte* (ed. D. MARGUERAT; Paris 2003), 105-122, 114: “[n]on pas la domination mais le service (v. 43-44): cette compréhension n’est pas une philosophie du sacrifice, elle passe par l’acceptation préalable d’avoir été racheté par le Fils de l’homme (v. 45)”.

actual situations in which they are read. Reading that one should be “last of all” in the modern western world has other implications than reading the same verse in a context of persecution, war or famine. Although the general meaning of the paradoxes is clear, these different contexts in which Christians are living make it difficult to generalize about how one should act. It seems to me we can make a distinction between two functions of the paradoxes. The main function that we have been emphasizing until now, is a continuous appeal for those who want to be great in the eyes of God to serve and to be last. This paradoxical thinking is an unceasing process without limits; there is no final point in the *imitatio Christi*. But in addition to this meaning, the paradoxes can also have a comforting, hope-giving function for those who are on the lower rungs of society. In order to understand this second function, one has to look at how the paradoxes shine their light retrospectively upon the first half of Mark’s gospel. Jesus is presented as a man with authority and success, but his authority is incomparably different from that of the religious hierarchy. “They were all amazed” about his authority (1,27). When the reader reaches the paradoxes in Mark 8-10, the scope of Jesus’ authority in the first half of the gospel becomes clear. Jesus never uses his authority for his own advantage. In fact, he shows in his miraculous deeds, his healings and exorcisms what power as service means. He is not doing this for himself but for the Reign of God. His authority is not one of violence or brutal power (contrast 10,42). He is in fact willing to help anyone who crosses his path, “all”. He serves the “non-entities” of society and in doing so he provokes the opposition of his opponents. He starts to lose his life.

* *

*

“The experience of paradox is the experience of being bracketed between seemingly incompatible but nevertheless coexisting polar opposites”⁵⁶. In more than one way the paradoxes in Mark 8,35; 9,35b and 10,43-44 are miniatures of the larger paradox that spans

⁵⁶ FOWLER, *Let the Reader Understand*, 184-185.

the gospel as a whole and which joins together in one story the Crucified Jesus of Nazareth and the Resurrected Messiah Son of God. In the call to lose one's life and in the hope and promise of being saved by God, the paradoxes combine both sides of this mystery of revelation. They offer an understandable synthesis of the gospel story in common language, not in a theological formula but in an anthropological translation. In the story, the literary device of paradox is used by Jesus to criticize the incomprehension of the disciples, and it thus becomes a strong instrument in Mark's communication with the reader. Again and again, these readers will keep struggling to understand how the two poles of Jesus' paradoxes can be thought together. And although they will probably never find the final answer during their lifetime, two insights are essential stepping stones along the way of their quest: (a) the paradoxes are only significant within the religious perspective of Jesus' teaching, and (b) only those people who will take the risk of losing their lives will come close to understanding the meaning of the paradoxes. The vulnerable author has done his work; his role is taken over by the vulnerable reader, who must continue it.

Université catholique de Louvain
Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium

Geert VAN OYEN

SUMMARY

The article proceeds in three steps. The paradoxes in Mark 8,35; 9,35; 10,43-44 tell in their own way that the mystery of the passion and resurrection of Jesus is to be experienced by the followers of Jesus in daily life. They are not only anticipations but also actualizations of that mystery. These paradoxes cannot be understood without the Christological foundation that God has saved Jesus from the dead. The use of paradoxes is in agreement with Mark's theology and Christology which as a whole is presented as a paradoxical story.

The Last Beatitude. Joy in Suffering*

I. The Last Beatitude in Matthean and Lucan Contexts

The *inclusio* consisting of βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν, “kingdom of heaven”¹, found in Matt 5,1.12, is not only the element that binds the entire passage together but it also implies that the blessings contained in between, from the second to the seventh, are different ways of proclaiming the kingdom itself². Moreover, two equal entities³ — with four beatitudes each — end in an enunciation of the blessing with the word δικαιοσύνη, “righteousness”.

The ninth, concluding beatitude, connects with the previous one by the catchwords διώκειν, “persecute” and οὐρανός, “heaven”⁴. Notwithstanding the fact that some scholars do not consider it authentic and on a par with the other eight⁵, it is clear that it has the

* A shorter version of this paper was read at the *Studiorum Novi Testamenti Societas 64th General Meeting*, Vienna, 4-8 August, 2009.

¹ Cf. N.J. McELENNEY, “The Beatitudes of the Sermon on the Mount”, *CBQ* 43 (1981) 1-13; D.A. HAGNER, *Matthew* (WBC 33/A-B; Dallas, TX 1993) I, 90; W.D. DAVIES – D. ALLISON, *The Gospel According to Saint Matthew. A Critical and Exegetical Commentary* (Edinburgh 1988) I, 452.

² Cf. DAVIES – ALLISON, *Matthew* I, 460. B. ESTRADA, “Le beatitudini. Chiarimento strutturale e contenuto”, *Generati da una parola di verità (Gc 1,18)*. Scritti in onore di R. Fabris (eds. S. GRASSO – E. MANICARDI) (Bologna 2006) 31-41.

³ It is preferable to follow the classical number of 8+1 beatitudes in Matthew 5,3-12, even though there are many proposals. For example, H.D. BETZ, *The Sermon on the Mount* (Minneapolis, ME 1995) 107, speaks of ten beatitudes. Already from Augustine and Thomas Aquinas the idea of seven beatitudes was frequent, but with variations. In modern times Benoit, Bultmann, Dodd, Hawkins, Weiss and Wellhausen, among others, are of this opinion.

⁴ Cf. R. MEYNET, “I frutti dell’analisi retorica per l’esegesi biblica”, *Greg* 77 (1996) 408, keeping the order of the Codex D, sees in Matthew’s beatitudes two blocks with an inclusive-concentric structure. The first block would be composed of seven blessings while the other is made up of the final two with the *logion* of salt and light.

⁵ Cf. R. GUNDRY, *Matthew. A Commentary on His Handbook for a Mixed Church under Persecution* (Grand Rapids, MI 1994) 73. E. SCHWEIZER instead

characteristic features of a real blessing⁶. Meynet, underlining the concept of heaven at the beginning and at the end of Matt 5,3-16, actually sees here a single literary unit in which the ninth beatitude has the hinge-function for the whole section⁷. This ninth blessing has a special literary form, much longer than that of the others. It is in fact more direct and not addressed in the general and impersonal fashion of the third person used in other Matthean beatitudes. The other makarisms look at a present condition while the last one talks about suffering and persecution as a pledge of an abundant future reward.

In the first four beatitudes the condition of misery and distress reflects a passive attitude that attracts God's gaze and solicitude. They are carriers of the kerygma to distressed people, the announcement of the kingdom's salvation to those who wait for it⁸. The second quartet contains the demands of the kingdom itself in Messianic times, the qualities required in order to be called μακάριοι⁹. The ninth blessing is pronounced in a future setting and contains a promise: suffering for Jesus' sake will merit a special reward in the kingdom. Thus, announcement-demand-promise would be the trilogy that describes the climactic proclamation of the beatitudes in Matthew¹⁰.

Luke's four beatitudes (6,20b-23) are formulated in the second person and derive from a common source with Matthew's, probably from Q¹¹, but both evangelists show a great degree of freedom in presenting the basic underlying tradition¹². The woes that follow the

says that Matthew would have composed the eighth beatitude based on the ninth one: *The Good News According to Matthew* (Atlanta, GA 1975) 84.

⁶ Cf. J. DUPONT, *Les béatitudes* (Bruges 1958-1973) I, 228; III, 308-310.

⁷ Cf. MEYNET, "I frutti dell'analisi retorica", 409. Also Dupont took this position some years ago (cf. his *Béatitudes*, III, 316. Cf. I, 209-229).

⁸ Cf. J. SCHNIEWIND, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus* (Göttingen¹³1984) 40.

⁹ Cf. SCHNIEWIND, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus*, 45-46.

¹⁰ The second person would help to create such a climax in the whole set of beatitudes. Cf. DAVIES – ALLISON, *Matthew* I, 461.

¹¹ For a reconstruction of Q and its parallels in the beatitudes, cf. J. LAMBRECHT, *The Sermon on the Mount*. Proclamation and Exhortation (Wilmington, DE 1985) 48-52.

¹² Cf. H. FRANKEMÖLLE, "Die Makarismen (Matt 5,1-12: Luke 6,20-23). Motive und Umfang der redaktionelle Komposition", *BZ* 15 (1971) 52-75.

beatitudes could be pre-Lucan¹³. The first three of them are focused on the condition of the μακάριοι: poor, hungry and suffering people describe better than Matthew's descriptions do the proclamation subject of Isaiah 61,1 and thus express more clearly the social concern of Jesus' message. There are good reasons to believe that the fourth beatitude originally formed part of the same block, though this is sometimes contested¹⁴. In Luke's beatitudes there is no clear-cut climax of announcement-demand-promise, as in Matthew. However, proclaiming the addressees' situation as the focus of God's attention and benevolence, the evangelist invites them to discipleship with its accompanying blessings. He then calls them in the fourth beatitude to be joyful in this world in spite of suffering, while thinking of the reward in heaven.

The language of the last beatitude in Matthew and Luke is as striking as its structure. The sequence is practically the same in both texts and their topic is "joy in suffering". Both gospels talk about the mistreatment the disciples will undergo. In Matthew 5,11 the reviling comes first, then the persecution and the slander. The Lucan description seems more faithful to its source, with an order and increase in intensity in the offenses listed: hatred, expulsion, reviling, rejecting the name. The first verb in Lk 6,22, μισεῖν, to hate, has a parallel in the eschatological discourse¹⁵. The concept evokes the image of the pious Jew who, surrounded by enemies, puts his confidence in God¹⁶.

The second verb, ἀφορίζειν, has no parallel in Matthew and means to cast out of a community¹⁷, as occurs in QL¹⁸. The formal exclusion from the synagogue would have come later, with a definitive break between Judaism and Christianity¹⁹. The equivalent

¹³ Cf. H. SCHÜRMANN, *Lukasevangelium* (HTKNT; Freiburg in Br. 1969) I, 339-341.

¹⁴ Cf. I. HOWARD MARSHALL, *The Gospel of Luke* (Grand Rapids, MI 1978) 247, says that it is "without adequate reason".

¹⁵ Cf. Mark 13,13; Matt 24,9; Luke 21,17, with the passive participle μισούμενοι.

¹⁶ Cf. DUPONT, *Béatitudes* I, 287.

¹⁷ Cf. SCHÜRMANN, *Lukasevangelium* I, 333.

¹⁸ Cf. IQS 6,25; 7,1; 8,24; CD 9,23; Ezra 10,8.

¹⁹ Cf. HOWARD MARSHALL, *Luke*, 252; NOLLAND, *Luke*, I, 285.

Hebrew word reveals the Semitic *milieu*²⁰, to which the disciples belonged.

In the place of hatred and exclusion, διώκειν is a *terminus technicus* in Matthew that could mean the persecution of disciples in the early church²¹. The verb appears twelve times in Matthew and Luke, never in Mark, and only once (Luke 17,23) outside of the context of persecution. But here it could be regarded as a kind of social discrimination against the early Christian community²².

The third verb in Luke 6,22 is ὀνειδίζειν, to revile, as in Matthew 5,11. The concept seems to come from Jewish wisdom literature²³. The fourth part of Luke's description of the offences is ἐκβάλωσιν τὸ ὄνομα ὑμῶν ὡς πονηρὸν, "cast out your name (as) evil", in comparison with the εἰπωσιν πᾶν πονηρὸν καθ' ὑμῶν "speaking all kinds of calumnies against you" in Matt 5,11, perhaps a free translation of the same idiom. The word "name" in the Lucan expression points to a Semitic background, as Black suggested²⁴. Either could be a reference to the name of "Christian", as Luke also knows²⁵.

²⁰ The verb בָּדַל (in Hiphil or Niphal), "to set apart", is frequent in the Creation narrative. Cf. DUPONT, *Béatitudes* I, 230-231.

²¹ Cf. HAGNER, *Matthew* I, 95.

²² Cf. R. METZNER, *Die Rezeption des Matthäusevangeliums im 1. Petrusbrief*. Studien zum traditionsgehistorischen und theologischen Einfluss des 1. Evangeliums auf den 1. Petrusbrief (WUNT 74; Tübingen 1995) 7-16, 27. According to this author the three concepts, βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν, δικαιοσύνη and διώκειν form the *Sondergut* of Matthew in the SM, becoming *termini technici* of his gospel.

²³ Pss 34,7; 41,11; 43,17; 54,13; 68,10; 73,10.18; 78,12; 88,52; 101,9; 118,42, and 12 times in other wisdom books. In narrative texts, from Judges to Chronicles it is frequent, as well as in Isaiah and Jeremiah. In the Minor Prophets, it occurs only in Zephaniah. Cf. *T. Rub.* 4,2; *T. Levi* 10,4. It occurs also nine times in the NT: in Mark 15,32; Matt 27,44 conveys the thieves' reproach to Jesus on the cross; in Matt 11,20, there is the condemnation the unbelieving cities. Cf. Mark 16,14, the quotation in Rom 15,3 and Jas 1,5. In 1Pet 4,14 it has the same sense as here.

²⁴ Cf. M. BLACK, *An Aramaic Approach to the Gospels and Acts* (Oxford 1967) 97-98. This seems to reflect the expressions of Dt 22,14.19 הוציא שם רע "cast out the name (as) evil". Luke's variation is in the personal pronoun, "your name".

²⁵ Cf. J.A. FITZMYER, *The Gospel According to Luke* (AB 28; Garden City, NY 1981) I, 635.

After seeing the terms that have to do with suffering, we can now analyze what is said about the joy regarding the reward (Matt 5,12; Luke 6,23). Luke's redactional variation with the imperative aorist *χάρητε* instead of Matthew's present, *χαίρετε*, gives the exhortation a striking actuality: it is not a matter of simply rejoicing, but of beginning to do (inchoative aorist) so when tribulation appears. The expression *ἐν ἐκείνῃ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ*, "in that day", without parallel in Matthew, confirms the distress as a particular event, not as permanent suffering. The repetition of *ὅταν*, in Luke 6,22, emphasizes the eventuality of the fact and invites the listener to be prepared for future distress.

The invitation to rejoice comes through two verbal forms: *χαίρετε καὶ ἀγαλλιᾶσθε* (Matt 5,12) or *χάρητε (...) καὶ σκιρτήσατε* (Luke 6,23). While *χαίρειν* is a common verb in classical and biblical literature, *ἀγαλλιᾶσθαι* is a concept that occurs only in the language of the Bible and early Christianity, similar to *ἀγαλλιᾶν* in classical Greek²⁶. These two verbs in LXX and NT — four times each²⁷ — mean exaltation and joy over God's salvation, showing well the sense of Semitic enjoy, in which there is not only profound and spiritual happiness but also its external, physical consequence with leaping, shouting and other outward manifestations. In the context of the passage the word *μακάριος* is present, calling for joy and exultation by those who will share the benefits of the eschatological happiness of the kingdom²⁸. Joining *χαίρειν* and *ἀγαλλιᾶσθαι* also reflects the pair of *שמח* and *גיל* frequent in OT writings (36 times), especially in the Psalms. Black sees behind *ἀγαλλιᾶσθαι* an "unnoticed Aramaism" present probably in Q²⁹. The redactional *σκιρτᾶν* in Luke is richer and more expressive, even though it is a metaphor a bit far removed from the original sense of the word. The verb describes young horses galloping in the fields as well as jumping with both legs

²⁶ Cf. B. ESTRADA, "Lieti nella speranza". La gioia nel Nuovo Testamento (Roma 2001) 22-28.

²⁷ Tob 13,15; Ps 95,12; Hab 3,18; Ode 4,18. In the NT, besides the last Beatitude, the couple appear in 1 Pet 4,13 and Rev 19,7.

²⁸ Cf. DUPONT, *Béatitudes* II, 335.

²⁹ Cf. BLACK, *Aramaic Approach*, 158. Cf. FITZMYER, *Luke* I, 637; HOWARD MARSHALL, *Luke*, 254.

rising up from the ground and dancing³⁰. It appears only seven times in LXX and three in the NT, all in Luke's gospel. The heaven, in the singular, denotes a Hellenistic concept that contrasts with the rather Semitic "heavens"³¹.

The suffering just described has a special mark, a motivation: it must be undergone for Jesus' sake, ἕνεκεν ἐμοῦ (Matt 5,11); Luke 6,22 says instead ἕνεκα τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου. If the previous beatitudes carry an implicit Christology (Jesus' mission as the beginning of the kingdom among humankind), the last one is more explicit and contemplates tribulation in a later period on account of Christ. Such an explicit assertion is difficult to apply to Jesus' time, but not to the time of the Church³². Could it be possible that the first Christians adopted this way of speaking, putting Jesus in the place of Israel's God? According to Mark, Jesus promises reward to "whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's ..." ³³. To give up all things³⁴, to stand before kings and governors³⁵, to be hated on account or "for the sake of my name", are expressions that reflect the catechetical concern of early Christian language.

The community sees the last beatitude as a model of suffering to imitate, not in a generic way but for Jesus' sake³⁶. It is not impossible that Jesus would have foreseen tribulation and verbal abuse³⁷ both for himself and for his disciples³⁸. The persecution of Christ's disciples, like the prophets of the OT³⁹, probably reflects the growing tension between the community for whom the gospel

³⁰ Cf. SCHÜRMANN, *Lukasevangelium*, 334, n. 65.

³¹ The expression is linked to the μισθός, reward, that extends its joy to the present time. Cf. M. CORBIN, "Votre récompense est grande dans les cieux", *Christus* 28 (1981) 65-77.

³² Cf. Acts 5,41; Cf. Acts 9,16; 15,26; 21,13; 2 Cor 4,11; 12,10; Phil 1,29; Rev 1,9; 2,3; 6,9; 20,4. Jer 15,15

³³ Mark 8,35; *par.* Matt 16,25; Luke 9,24.

³⁴ Mark 10,29 *par.*

³⁵ Cf. Mark 13,9-10 *par.*

³⁶ Cf. A. SATAKE, "Das Leiden der Jünger 'um meinetwillen'", *ZNW* 67 (1976) 4-19.

³⁷ It is considered a sin as grave as idolatry, fornication and bloodshed put together. Cf. *Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch* (eds. H. STRACK – P. BILLERBECK) (München 1926-8) I, 227.

³⁸ Cf. HOWARD MARSHALL, *Luke*, 252.

³⁹ The first merit is that of suffering unjustly, the second of suffering for Jesus' sake. The suffering of Amos and Jeremiah could be two exemplary cases

was written and their Jewish brethren⁴⁰. Rather than the lexical context, it is the fact of future persecution in the name of Jesus and for the sake of faith in Him that gives the last blessing its *Sitz im Leben*. Matthew sometimes has references to the title “Son of Man”, showing a tendency to identify Jesus himself in this way. The Lucan formulation may well be original⁴¹, especially if Jesus used this title to apply to himself during his earthly mission. Hatred, offence and slander suffered by the disciples could yet fit within Jesus’ period.

II. The beatitude’s content: a persecution form

1. *A Pattern of Persecution in Early Christianity*

Today it does not seem easy to imagine the followers of Christ becoming joyful when suffering. The idea was yet not unusual in the early church. One of the first scholars to speak explicitly about it was Edward G. Selwyn⁴² who in his groundbreaking commentary on First Peter traced back the catechetical basis that would have served for the redaction of the letter. According to him, there would have been in the primitive church a persecution form or a persecution fragment, witnessed to from the very beginning in NT writings⁴³. Indeed, the trails of such a form stretch from 1 Thess to 1 Pet, and its basic structure is found in the ninth beatitude, whose main expressions are employed to transmit the same teaching⁴⁴.

of illtreated prophets. Cf. J. ALONSO DIAZ, “Felices los perseguidos por la justicia”, *BibFe* 9 (1983) 200-207.

⁴⁰ “Jewish Leaders”: DAVIES – ALLISON, *Matthew*, I, 461; Cf. HAGNER, *Matthew*, I, 95

⁴¹ Cf. S. SCHULZ, *Q – Die Spruchquelle der Evangelisten* (Zürich 1972) 453.

⁴² E.G. SELWYN, *The first Epistle of St. Peter*. The Greek text with Introduction, Notes and Essays (London 1947). The author points out a previous study about catechesis in the early church: Ph. CARRINGTON, *The Primitive Christian Catechism* (Cambridge 1940), going back to A. SEEBERG, *Der Katechismus der Urchristenheit* (Leipzig 1903).

⁴³ Cf. SELWYN, *First Peter*, 439-458.

⁴⁴ The texts mentioned by SELWYN are: Acts 5,41; 14,22; Rom 5,3-5; 2 Cor 4,17-18; 6,10; 8,2; Phil 1,29; 1 Thess 1,6; 2 Thess 1,4-6; Heb 10,32-6; Jas 1,2.12; 1 Pet 1,6; 4,13-14.

Moreover, Selwyn showed that, according to those texts, Christians rejoice not despite their recent distress but because of it⁴⁵. It was, however, W. Nauck who concentrated on the elements of that structure, presented them in a systematic way⁴⁶ and showed that they reflect a well-founded tradition, whose elements would be essentially those of the last Matthean and Lucan beatitude:

A — blessed are you (μακάριοι ...)

B — When men will revile you ... (ὅταν ὀνειδίσωσιν κτλ ...)

C — rejoice ... (χαίρετε ...)

D — because your reward ... (ὅτι ὁ μισθός ...)

Leaving aside the final mention of the prophets, the *logion*'s four constitutive elements are: the makarism, the situation that causes suffering, the invitation to be joyful and the call to consider the future reward. Nauck had studied practically all the passages previously mentioned by Selwyn, except Act 14,22 ("we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God") and Phil 1,29 ("For unto you it is given on behalf of Christ, not only to believe in him, but also to suffer for his sake"). He catches a glimpse of an original common pattern, an *Urform*, whose development corresponds to a similar structure in some NT passages⁴⁷. The small variations among them reflect oral tradition, Dupont also says, adding that the last beatitude's main words would be embedded in a wide context of parenetical enunciations around the same topic⁴⁸.

Early Christianity goes back often to the idea of tribulation and suffering, looking at them as an opportunity to rejoice, while the mind is thinking of the reward. Nauck's analysis shows 1 Pet 4,13-14 as a paradigmatic text which contains the same elements as the last Matthean and Lucan beatitude, but in a different order (C, D, B, A). In a wider context the same four topics are present in Jas 1,2.12

⁴⁵ Cf. SELWYN, *First Peter* 127.

⁴⁶ Cf. W. NAUCK, "Freude im Leiden", *ZNW* 46 (1955) 68-80.

⁴⁷ "Dass der Grundstock dieser Tradition sehr alt ist und dass die Variabilität nur durch mündliche Überlieferung zu erklären ist". NAUCK, *Freude*, 73.

⁴⁸ Cf. DUPONT, *Béatitudes* II, 341.

(A, B, D, C)⁴⁹. Besides those two, there are other texts like Rom 5,3-5 (C, B; *καυχᾶσθαι* with a nuance of “to rejoice”), Acts 5,41 (C, B), 2 Cor 4,17-18 (B, C, D, glory in the place of joy), 2 Cor 8,2 (B, C), 1 Thess 1,6.10 (B, C, D), 2 Thess 1,4-6 (C, B, D; *ἐγκανχᾶσθαι*), Heb 10,32-36 (B, C, D).

2. Search for the Origin of the Form

The main contribution of Nauck is not simply to have found and systematized the passages containing joy in suffering but to formulate the thesis that this topic may go back to Judaism⁵⁰. According to him, the concept of *πειρασμός*, present in James and 1 Pet finds its roots in some OT passages with a call to thank God for trials undergone⁵¹. Some of them are quoted by Nauck and Dupont⁵², but the most complete analysis has been done by Millauer⁵³, who tried to gather texts which join suffering with joy from OT, intertestamental (IL) and rabbinical literature (RL), and from Qumran literature, even though the research in the latter corpus had yet to be finished.

a) Old Testament

The main OT texts which link suffering with joy are Job 5,17 (“happy is the man whom God corrects”), Ps 94,12 (“Blessed is the man whom You chasten, O Lord”), Dan 12,12 (“Blessed is he that waits ...”) and Tob 13,16 (“O blessed are they which love you, for they shall rejoice in Your peace: blessed are they who have been

⁴⁹ I have taken the notation used by DUPONT: A, B, C, D, instead of Nauck's: Ia,b, IIa,b, less effective in showing the structure.

⁵⁰ Cf. NAUCK, *Freude*, 70-73: such a particular tradition must have leaned on another tradition handed down later.

⁵¹ Cf. NAUCK, *Freude*, 73-74. But *πειρασμός* as external test, occurs only in Jas 1,2.12, 1Pt 1,6; 4.12, and Acts 20,19, where Paul talks about “trials which befell me by the plots of the Jews”. Cf. C. BIGG, *The Epistles of St. Peter and St. Jude* (Edinburgh 1987) 103. It is in no way a NT common theme.

⁵² Cf. DUPONT, *Béatitudes* II, 339-341.

⁵³ Cf. H. MILLAUER, *Leiden als Gnade. Eine traditions-geschichtliche Untersuchung zur Leidenstheologie des ersten Petrusbriefes* (Frankfurt am M 1976) 165-179, sorts texts about joy and suffering into four topics: joy after suffering, joy despite suffering, joy in suffering and joy in the Messianic age.

sorrowful because of all Your scourges”)⁵⁴. They could have been written in a period when several ordeals happened to the chosen people, probably the Maccabean age. It triggered the apocalyptic period in which there was no clear distinction between the old covenants and the new covenant, partly due to Messianic expectation. Two texts deserve our attention: Jdt 8,25-7: “let us thank ... because He puts us to the test” (εὐχαριστήσωμεν [...] ὅτι πειράζει ἡμᾶς) could contain the elements C, B, even though it does not speak about joy, as Nauck himself recognizes⁵⁵. Wis 3,4-6 (ἐὰν κολασθῶσιν ἡ ἐλπίς αὐτῶν ἀθανασίας πλήρης) considers a brief punishment and the reward of immortality (B, D).

b) Later Judaism and Intertestamental Literature

In the second Book of Maccabees (2 Macc 6,28-30), Eleazar refuses to eat unclean food lest he give bad example to young people: “I now endure sore pains in body by being beaten: but in soul I am well pleased to suffer these things, because I fear him” (B, C). The first element is formed by the trial (ταῖς πληγαῖς τελευτᾶν) and sore pains (ἀλγηδόνας μαστιγούμενος), the second, by soul complacency (κατὰ ψυχὴν δὲ ἡδέως), not properly joy. Eleazar foresees his death and says that he will suffer it willingly. Rather than joy in suffering we could speak of readiness to accept pain⁵⁶.

In the account of the seven brothers (4 Macc 7,21-23) the topic is formulated in an interrogative way. The author sees that suffering any toil for virtue’s sake is a cause of being blessed (B, A). The macarism in the neuter gender (μακάριόν ἐστιν) makes no reference to the person but to the very possibility of enduring pain and toil. Behind the call to control emotions and sentiments and even pain lies some Stoic reasoning that considers the model of a virtuous and wise man. A kind of self-satisfaction could come from this, but certainly it is not the joy that comes from God.

In the same Fourth Book of Maccabees appears the declaration of the second of the seven brothers to the tyrant (4 Macc 9,29):

⁵⁴ Cf. MILLAUER, *Leiden als Gnade*, 167-168. Other texts quoted are: Is 35,10; 51,11; 61,7 and Ps 126.

⁵⁵ Cf. NAUCK, *Freude*, 77.

⁵⁶ Cf. L. GOPPELT, *Der erste Petrusbrief* (Göttingen 1977) 302-303, adds also 2 Macc 6.12-17 and 4 Macc 17.20-2.

“I will endure any kind of death for the religion of our Fathers” (C, B). The will to accept death is followed by the adjective ἡδύς, looking at the Fathers’ example. But not even in this case could we speak of an eschatological joy.

Another passage (4 Macc 11,12) talks about “most noble sufferings” (διὰ γενναϊοτέρων πόνων) considered as gifts, and endured for the Law’s sake with courage (καρτερίᾳ). But here there is more good will and desire to accept toil than there is joy. The idea of tribulation as a cause of joy is rarely considered in Judaism⁵⁷.

For Nauck, that early particular attitude would be also found in contemporary NT Judaism. He was thinking especially of three texts belonging to the Second (Syriac Apocalypse) Baruch, a translation from a Greek text (maybe from a Hebrew/Aramaic original) composed sometime after the Roman destruction of the Second Temple⁵⁸. According to him, the book would contain the tradition behind the last beatitude, even though he does not accept any influence from early Christianity in Baruch, as Charles does⁵⁹. Here are the texts:

2 Baruch 48, 48-50

“But now, let us cease talking about the wicked and inquire about the righteous. And I will tell you about their blessedness and I shall not be silent about their glory, which is kept for them. For surely, as you endured much labor in the short time in which you live in this passing world, so you will receive great light in that world which has no end”⁶⁰.

The elements are A, D, B. The blessedness is caused by the reward in the other world. In spite of the lot of labor endured, they are not invited to rejoice thereat.

2 Baruch 52, 5-7

“And concerning the righteous ones, what will they do now? Enjoy yourselves in the suffering which you suffer now. For why do you

⁵⁷ Cf. MILLAUER, *Leiden als Gnade*, 175.

⁵⁸ Cf. F.J. MURPHY, *The Structure and Meaning of Second Baruch* (Atlanta 1985) 136-139.

⁵⁹ Cf. R.H. CHARLES, *The Apocalypse of Baruch: Translated from Syriac* (London 1896) LXXIX.

⁶⁰ This text is taken from F. KLJN, “2 (Syriac Apocalypse of) Baruch”, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* (ed. J.H. Charlesworth) (London 1983-1985) I, 637.

look for the decline of your enemies? Prepare your souls for that which is kept for you and make ready your souls for the reward which is preserved for you”⁶¹.

This is the key passage in Nauck’s theory about the “joy in suffering” pattern in Judaism⁶². Even though it contains three elements (C, B, D), the translation is not at all correct. The verb *cebaw* in Syriac text would be rather translated as “be pleased with”, “be satisfied with” instead of rejoicing. If the author had wanted to mean that, says Dupont, he would have employed the specific Syriac verb *hedî*, “to rejoice”⁶³.

2 Baruch 54, 16-18

“The one who believes will receive reward. But now, turn yourselves to destruction, for unrighteous ones who are living now, for you will be visited suddenly since you have once rejected the intelligence of the Most High”⁶⁴.

The last text quoted by Nauck beckons to future reward but scarcely mentions suffering, which perhaps can be deduced from faith, able to bear every kind of toil⁶⁵. The elements are B, D.

Another passages from IL to be considered is 1 Enoch 108, 10: “He has caused them to be recompensed, for they were all found loving God more than the fire of their eternal souls, and while they were being trodden upon by evil people, experienced abuse and insult by them, they continued blessing us”⁶⁶. The blessed will be rewarded because they preferred to love God instead of worldliness, in spite of the abuse which evil people caused them. And instead of vindicating themselves they kept on blessing the offenders. Three elements of the pattern are present (A, D, B) but it is precisely the invitation to rejoice in the midst of tribulations that is missing.

⁶¹ Cf. KLJN, *2 Baruch*, 639.

⁶² Cf. NAUCK, *Freude*, 75.

⁶³ Cf. DUPONT, *Béatitudes* II, 344. And even NAUCK, *Freude*, 75, n. 42, admits that he had not expected in this passage the verb *cebaw*.

⁶⁴ KLJN, *2 Baruch*, 640.

⁶⁵ The four elements of the pattern would not be only in this text, but in the two former texts of Baruch taken together, according to the arrangement made by Charles: A in Bar 48,49; B in 48,50; C in 52,6; D in 52,7: Cf. NAUCK, *Freude*, 76.

⁶⁶ Text: E. ISAAC, “1 (Ethiopic) Enoch”, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* I, 88-89.

To these texts of IL studied by Nauck, Millauer adds two of 4 Ezra⁶⁷. They deal with admonition about punishing the evildoers in the expectation of the eschatological age:

“At the end (...) the whole earth, freed from your violence, may be refreshed and relieved and may hope for the judgment and mercy of him who made it” (11,37-46)⁶⁸ and

“But he will deliver in mercy the remnant of my people, who have been saved throughout my borders and he will make them joyful until the end comes, the day of judgment, of which I spoke to you at the beginning” (12,34)⁶⁹. Both texts look at the future reward (element D), yet they do not hint at the tests that people had undergone. The passage is talking about the coming of a Messianic era after a final punishment, whose characteristic would be the fulness of joy. There is neither an explicit reference to suffering nor a relationship between the period of the author and the eschatological, Messianic age.

c) Qumran Literature

There are some texts of QL close to the psalms⁷⁰, where joy comes along with praise and glory⁷¹. Other texts contain also the pain and toil that afterwards would be transformed into joy. However, recent better editions of QL show how some of them deal with the sorrow and humiliation of enemies instead of with one's own⁷².

1QS 10,17

“When distress is unleashed I shall praise Him (בְּהַפְתָּה צָרָה אֶהְלֵלֵנּוּ), just as I shall sing to Him for his deliverance (וּבִישׁוּעָתוֹ אֶרְנֶנָּה). To no

⁶⁷ Cf. MILLAUER, *Leiden als Gnade*, 176-177.

⁶⁸ Text: B. METZGER, “4 Ezra”, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* I, 549.

⁶⁹ Cf. METZGER, 4 Ezra 550.

⁷⁰ They are: 1 QM 1,8-9; 12,13-15; 13,12-16; 14,4; 17,6-9; 1 QS 4,6-7; 1 QH 12,21-22; 1 QSb 2. All of them are classified as texts about joy *after* suffering: Cf. MILLAUER, *Leiden als Gnade*, 168.

⁷¹ שמח occurs 168 times in QL; 48 רבך times; 32 גיל times.

⁷² Texts of QL are taken from, *The Dead Sea Scrolls. Study Edition* (eds. F. GARCÍA MARTÍNEZ – E.J.C. TIGCHELAAR) (Leiden/Boston/Köln 1997-8). Compared with former translations, the differences are marked in 1QM 1,8-9; 13,12-16; 14,4; 17,6-9. The same thing happens with 1QH 9,24-8 whose theme of toil is evident, but not the coming joy.

man shall I return”⁷³. The author exults in seeing God who is coming to help him in the midst of distress, and the singing of joy (רִנָּן) comes in the future delivery from toil⁷⁴.

1Q34bis f1+2,1

“The time of our peace (מִרְצֵד שְׁלוֹמֵנוּ) [... for you console us in our distress (מִנְנוּכֵי שְׂמֻחָתֵנוּ) and you gather together our exiles] (וְאַסְפָּה וְנִדְחֵינוּ)”⁷⁵. God is invoked to come and heal the sorrow, while there is an admonition to search for peace in that situation.

1QH^a 10,5-7

“... [you have straightened in my heart] all the deeds of injustice [...] and you place [truth before my eyes and the reprove]rs of justice in all [...] smitten by b[low]s of the comforters [...] who announce (וּמְשִׁמְעֵי) joy (שְׂמֻחָה) [for my de]ep sorrow (לְאַבְלֵי יָגִי), [proclaiming pe]ace to all disaster [...] the strong, to weaken my heart, and those who gain [strength]”⁷⁶. The only reference to joy, while exalting the divine power, comes as an announcement after suffering, from people who comfort the writer, but not in the moment in which tribulation is endured.

1QH^a 23,15

“To [be] according to your truth, a herald [...] of your goodness to proclaim to the poor the abundance of your compassion, [...]... from the spring [...] the brok]ken of spirit (דְּכֹאֵי רוּחַ) and the mourning to everlasting joy (לְאַבְלִים לְשִׂמְחָה עוֹלָם)”⁷⁷. A future and eternal joy seems to sooth the actual situation of pain. More than talking about joy in suffering he describes the passing from suffering to joy: they are not present at the same time.

4Q381f33+35,2-3

“And you will establish for me times and ... [above the heaven]s rise YHWH and ... [...] and we revel in your might because [your wisdom] is unfathomable and let your reproach for me (תִּכְחַתֵּךְ לִי וְתָחִי) become joy (לְשִׂמְחָה)”⁷⁸. In the writer’s soul there is a pain caused by the reproach, but joy would come from considering the utility of the

⁷³ Cf. GARCÍA MARTÍNEZ – TIGCHELAAR, *Dead Sea Scrolls I*, 94-95.

⁷⁴ The same text appears in 4Q256 20,6.

⁷⁵ Cf. GARCÍA MARTÍNEZ – TIGCHELAAR, *Dead Sea Scrolls I*, 144-145.

⁷⁶ Cf. GARCÍA MARTÍNEZ – TIGCHELAAR, *Dead Sea Scrolls I*, 160-161.

⁷⁷ Cf. GARCÍA MARTÍNEZ – TIGCHELAAR, *Dead Sea Scrolls I*, 198-199.

⁷⁸ E. SCHULLER, “381. 4Q Non-Canonical Psalms B”, *Discoveries in the Judean Desert XI: Qumran Cave 4* (ed. E. Tov) (Oxford 1998) 122-124; cf. GARCÍA MARTÍNEZ – TIGCHELAAR, *Dead Sea Scrolls II*, 758-759.

admonition, and the wisdom of God that corrects in such a way: there is no specific reference to suffering.

d) Rabbinic Literature

Among some RL late writings, in *Targum Neofiti* is written: “Blessed are you, just men. What a wonder (reward) is done (prepared) for you before YHWH in the coming world!”⁷⁹. The actual situation is accepted because of the consideration of a future recompense. By the same token, the Babylonian Talmud (5th century CE) mentions joy in suffering, in close similarity to the last beatitude’s promise⁸⁰. It is not improbable, however, that they had borrowed the topic from early Christianity.

In view of the above presentation what could one conclude regarding the possible origin of a persecution form in early Judaism? One remains hardly surprised with Millauer’s assertion that there are no proofs of the topic in Jewish literature⁸¹ or with the position of Metzner who decisively affirms the originality of the gospel tradition⁸². One could also agree with Selwyn who, comparing and contrasting Christian patterns with Jewish analogies, says: “the great difference is the living hope and consequent joy which the resurrection of Christ has imparted to it”⁸³ and with Nauck who, talking about the early Christian tradition of joy in suffering, sees its decisive difference from late Judaism in the “presence of the salvific announcement and in the union of every person with the passion of Jesus Himself”⁸⁴. The last two cases, however, require some qualification. Even if there are in Early and

⁷⁹ *Targum Neofiti 1: Numbers* (trans. M. McNamara) (Edinburgh 1995) *in loc.* Num 23,23, 258.

⁸⁰ “Of those who are humiliated but don’t humiliate others, hear themselves reviled but don’t answer, act out of love and accept suffering with joy, Scripture says:... *Bavli Tractate Shabbat 7-10* (ed. J. Neusner) (Atlanta 1993) 9.4.I.33 (88b), 84.

⁸¹ “Wir kommen zu dem Ergebnis, dass die Vorstellung, dass das leiden selbst Ursache der Freude sein könnte, für das Judentum ein seltener Gedanke ist”. MILLAUER, *Leiden als Gnade*, 179.

⁸² “Ein Makarismus dem Thema “Leiden um der Gerechtigkeit Willen” ist in der jüdischen, hellenistischen und urchristlichen Literatur ohne Parallele”. METZNER, *Die Rezeption des Matthäusevangelium im 1. Petrusbrief*, 19.

⁸³ Cf. SELWYN, *First Peter*, 128.

⁸⁴ Cf. NAUCK, *Freude*, 76.

Second Temple Judaism some texts indicating joy after suffering and joy in spite of suffering⁸⁵, what they meant is an invitation to bear pain and toil patiently or to interpret suffering positively as a divine testing of constancy. One does not find, however, any explicit text in Jewish writings which talks about joy in suffering:

To comfort those who are poor or hungry, or mournful, or persecuted, is one thing. But to tell them that they not only will be happy, but are, or should feel themselves, really and truly, happy now, this is quite another thing. To tell them that they ought positively to be glad and rejoice in their misfortune struck a new note — a note of great significance and power, a note which was to have great consequences of far-reaching importance. This was promoted by the beatitudes (...). And these notes and excellences have been, it must be acknowledged, distinctive of Christianity⁸⁶.

It is, therefore, necessary to place in perspective the thesis of Nauck about the Jewish origins of joy in suffering⁸⁷.

III. The Tradition in 1 Peter

Two passages of 1 Pet about rejoicing in trial and suffering, are often quoted in the studies by Selwyn and Nauck⁸⁸. Exhortation to bear tribulations beginning in 1 Pet 1,4-8 reaches its climax in 4,12-16. A third passage, 1 Pet 3,13-17, completes the framework that allows one to contemplate that topic in the light of Matthean tradition.

1. *Three Texts in the Letter*

1 Pet 1,4-8 speaks, after the initial *eulogia*, about “an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fades not away, reserved in heaven for you”. Such an eschatological perspective is supported by

⁸⁵ “Die Freude im Leiden (im Judentum) ist ein Freude trotz des Leidens, nicht über das Leiden”. Millauer, *Leiden als Gnade*, 179.

⁸⁶ Cf. C.G. MONTEFIORE, *The Synoptic Gospels* (London 1927) II, 44.

⁸⁷ Cf. J.H. ELLIOT, *1 Peter* (AB 37B; New York 2000) 776; F. SCHRÖGER, *Gemeinde im 1. Petrusbrief: Untersuchungen zum Selbstverständnis einer christlichen Gemeinde an der Wende vom 1. zum 2. Jahrhundert* (Passau 1981) 186.

⁸⁸ “Joy in suffering is an essentially Christian teaching”: SELWYN, *1 Peter*, 450. Cf. B. RIGAUX, *Saint Paul. Les Épîtres aux Thessaloniens* (Paris 1956) 588.

the “faith unto a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time” (1,7). The reward (element D) is clearly mentioned, while joy in suffering (elements C, B) appears in the previous verse: “in this you rejoice though now for a little while, you may have to suffer various trials”. There is no makarism in this Letter’s *overture*, but an echo of the last beatitude can be heard.

1 Pet 4,12-16 stands out as the emblematic text containing all the topics of the last beatitude. The first call not be astounded at the fiery ordeal is followed by the words (4,13): “rejoice in so far as you share Christ’s sufferings that you may also rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed”. Clearly elements C, B, D come together, while the makarism (A) comes in the next verse: “if you are reproached for the name of Christ, you are blessed”. There is a strong correspondence not only with the last beatitude, but also with its vocabulary. First of all, the couple *χαίρειν – ἀγαλλιᾶσθαι*, is only present here and in the Matthean text, besides Rev 19,7. Then, there is the occurrence of the verb *ὀνειδίζειν* together with the adjective *μακάριος*. Furthermore, the underlining of the expression *ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι Χριστοῦ*, showing that the tradition of the early church about the words in Matthew’s gospel: *ἕνεκεν ἑμοῦ*, has been interpreted in this way: to undergo pain and suffering for His name’s sake⁸⁹.

A third passage, 1 Pet 3,13-17, is placed in the midst of a section where the framework is the pursuit and practice of goodness and its power to triumph through suffering. The author, describing the condition of a righteous person: “now, who is there to harm you if you are zealous for what is right?”, takes his immediate lead from the previous section which concludes with the words of Ps 34 (33). Then he adds (3,14): “but even if you do suffer for righteousness’ sake, you will be blessed”. Here the first two elements (B, A) of the beatitude are present. The fact of being elected and protected by God does not preclude suffering. On the contrary, the possibility of persecution is regarded as a blessing. The sentence is very close to Matt 5,10 where *μακάριος*, in the third person, is coupled with “for

⁸⁹ Cf. METZNER, *Die Rezeption des Matthäusevangelium im 1. Petrusbrief* 44: “Die Wendung *ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι Χριστοῦ* ist also sachlich identisch mit der mt. Wendung *ἕνεκεν ἑμοῦ*”. Cf. J. CERVANTES, *La pasión de Jesucristo en la Primera Carta de Pedro*. Centro literario y teológico de la carta (Estella 1991) 305-307.

righteousness' sake" (ἐνεκεν δικαιοσύνης similar to this διὰ δικαιοσύνην). He exhorts people to suffer because of commitment to a life of virtue⁹⁰. The noun δικαιοσύνη with the preposition διὰ occurs only three more times, in Romans⁹¹, where it deals with a righteousness that comes from God, the salvation given to mankind through faith.

The author goes on to say: "But in your hearts reverence Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to make a defense to anyone who calls you to account for the hope that is in you" (1 Pet 3,15). This verse, one of the most often quoted in the letter, is looking not only at the community's mission of witness, but also at the eschatological recompense as the foundation of their hope (element D). In 3,9 the author had written in: ἵνα εὐλογίαν κληρονομήσητε, "in order that you might inherit a blessing". The inheritance as an implicit reward takes the place of the βασιλεία of Matt 5,10⁹².

The fourth element of the last beatitude (C), joy, is apparently missing. Yet in 3,17 the 1 Pet writes: "For it is better to suffer for doing right, if that should be God's will". An acceptance of suffering and even to hold it as "better", calls the texts of OT and IL.

Selwyn, Nauck and even Dupont quote, when they talk about joy in suffering in 1 Pet, only 1,4-8 and 4,12-16, skipping this passage in chapter 3. The concern is more directed to suffering διὰ δικαιοσύνην⁹³, but there is also a hint about joy in tribulation. Only Michaels⁹⁴ has pinpointed the link between 1 Pet 3,13-17 and 4,12-16 concerning this topic. The passage well reflects the gospel tradition and conforms to Nauck's *Urform* about joy in suffering. The makarism in 3,14 compensates the absence of χαίρειν – χαρά.

⁹⁰ Cf. D.P. SENIOR, D.J. HARRINGTON, *1 Peter, Jude, 2 Peter* (Collegeville, MN 2003) 94.

⁹¹ Rom 4,13; 5,21; 8,10.

⁹² Cf. METZNER, *Die Rezeption des Matthäusevangelium im 1. Petrusbrief*, 31, shows also the association between kingdom and inheritance in Matthew's gospel.

⁹³ Cf. R. OMANSON, "Suffering for Righteousness' Sake", *RevExp* 79 (1982) 440.

⁹⁴ Cf. J. RAMSEY MICHAELS, *1 Peter* (WBC 49; Dallas, TX 1988) 263.

2. For Jesus Christ's Sake

The linking of the three texts comes not only from their lexical forms, but also from the similitude and harmony of thought. Behind the passages lies a climactic discourse about trials and persecutions. 1 Pet 1,6 (εἰ δέον [ἐστίν] λυπηθέντες ἐν ποικίλοις πειρασμοῖς) considers a possibility in the future; the conditional clause in 1 Pet 3,14 with the optative (εἰ καὶ πάσχοιτε διὰ δικαιοσύνην, μακάριοι) points to a not remote contingency. The conditional with the indicative in 1 Pet 4,14 (εἰ ὀνειδίζεσθε ἐν ὀνόματι Χριστοῦ, μακάριοι) presumes instead a real eventuality, a persecution that fits well with its pastoral situation: "For they were not an experience (that would have called for the present or perfect participle) but an event, and an event pregnant with meaning"⁹⁵. There are some guidelines traced in this passage:

- trials are the means used by God to prove the believer's faith;
- rejoicing in suffering allows them to share Christ's tribulations and later his glory;
- the faithful always experience, in different ways, the future glory that awaits them⁹⁶.

The doxologies in 4,11 (ἵνα ἐν πᾶσιν δοξαζῇται ὁ Θεός) and in 4,16 (δοξαζέτω δὲ τὸν Θεόν) set a framework of glorification in the midst of trials that are interpreted as part and parcel of the new era⁹⁷.

The controversy between Gundry and Best concerning Jesus' logia and gospel tradition in 1 Pet is very instructive. Gundry holds the existence of *verba Christi* in the letter. Some examples would be 1 Pet 1,6; 2,12; 3,14 and 4,13. He concludes that "only Petrine authorship of the Epistle and authenticity of the gospel-passages adequately account for the Petrine pattern of the *Verba Christi*"⁹⁸.

⁹⁵ Cf. SELWYN, *First Peter*, 127.

⁹⁶ Cf. J.L. DE VILLIERS, "Joy in Suffering in I Peter", *Neot* 9 (1975) 81.

⁹⁷ Cf. G.L. BORCHERT, "The Conduct of Christians in the Face of the 'Fiery Ordeal' (1Peter 4.12-5.11)", *RevExp* 79 (1982) 453. Cf. Ez 38,39; Dan 7,21-7; 12,1; Joel 2; Hab 3,3-16; Zeph 1-3; Zach 11-14.

⁹⁸ Cf. R.H. GUNDRY, "'Verba Christi' in 1 Peter: the Implications Concerning the Authorship of 1 Peter and the Authenticity of the Gospel Tradition", *NTS* 13 (1966/67) 342-343.350.

Best answers him saying that 1 Pet could be evidence of how a common tradition underlying Matthew and Luke had influenced the early church, seen in:

- a knowledge in 1 Pet of Jesus' *logia*, but not of his parables or miracles;
- lack of connection between Peter and Mark;
- a contact with a developed gospel tradition, rather than with the gospel's text;
- quotations from the OT which are taken from the gospels. At the end he states that contacts with gospels lie essentially in two blocks in Luke and 3 isolated sayings in Matthew. Coincidences in 1 Clement help to see that they depended on oral rather than written tradition, especially in catechetical usage⁹⁹.

In a further answer to Best, Gundry argues that the case for Peter's authorship rests on reminiscences which are neither small nor few. At the same time he holds that a less original form of gospel tradition does not necessarily imply that the author of the letter did not see or hear Jesus firsthand¹⁰⁰. Luke's frequent avoidance of Semitic expressions seems to lead 1 Pet closer to Jesus' tradition through Matthew¹⁰¹. Both Best and Gundry agree however that there is an exception with the verb ἐπηρεάζειν in Luke 6,28 and 1 Pet 3,16, the only two places in the whole Greek Bible where it appears, as Schlosser has well remarked. Finally, in their discussion is also mentioned Spicq's thesis about Ps 118 and its link with Petrine tradition¹⁰². That interesting debate regarding the fidelity to Jesus' tradition finishes without a winner.

What Lohse had enunciated some years ago¹⁰³, continues to be discussed in several contributions and studies. Brox, saying that the

⁹⁹ Cf. E. BEST, "1 Peter and the Gospel Tradition", *NTS* 16 (1969/70) 111-113.

¹⁰⁰ Cf. R.H. GUNDRY, "Further Verba on "Verba Christi" in 1 Peter", *Bib* 55 (1974) 213.

¹⁰¹ Cf. METZNER, *Die Rezeption des Matthäusevangelium im 1. Petrusbrief*, 44-48; GUNDRY, "Further Verba", 229.

¹⁰² Cf. C. SPICQ, "La 1a. Petri et le témoignage évangélique de saint Pierre", *StTh* 20 (1966) 59.

¹⁰³ Cf. E. LOHSE, "Paränese und Kerygma im ersten Petrusbrief", *ZNW* 45 (1954) 68-89. For him, there are no proofs in 1 Pet, of dependence on the gospels or other NT writings: 70.

hypothesis of literary dependence from the gospels in 1 Pet must be considered an unsuccessful and vain attempt¹⁰⁴, seems not to take into account that the makarism about the abuse (ὀνειδίζειν) is a typical proof that 1 Pet stands in a stage that depends on a redactional blueprint of Matthew and Luke¹⁰⁵. By the same token, Schlosser finds the origin of these words of 1 Pet in Jesus' tradition, with a variation in their composition¹⁰⁶. Studying some terms like δικαιοσύνη and ἀγαλλιᾶσθαι leads one to affirm a contact with Jesus' words in Matthean and Lucan tradition. Even though we could not speak of literary dependence of 1 Pet on the gospels, there is a connection between the Letter's texts and Jesus' words. Luz looks especially at 1 Pet 2,12 and 3,14, where contact with Matt 5.16 and 5,10 respectively is "more than possible"¹⁰⁷, while Metzner says that the author of 1 Pet knows the makarism and has modified it according to the addressees' circumstances¹⁰⁸. So it is probable that 1 Pet depends on the Gospel tradition, and specifically on Matthew.

* *

*

It is likely that 1 Pet reflects a saying of Jesus, which had become part of the ethical tradition of early Christianity to search for meaning in suffering¹⁰⁹. Jesus' attitude towards His own violent and shameful death would have underlined the far-reaching

¹⁰⁴ Cf. N. BROX, "Der erste Petrusbrief in der literarischen Tradition des Urchristentums", *Kairos* 20 (1978) 189.

¹⁰⁵ Cf. MILLAUER, *Leiden als Gnade*, 157; R. Metzner, *Die Rezeption des Matthäusevangelium im 1. Petrusbrief*, 39, underlines the dependence of Matt.

¹⁰⁶ "Il est vraisemblable que Pierre fait echo à un motif qui s'enracine bien dans la tradition de Jésus mais dont la mise en forme était variée". J. SCHLOSSER, "La Première lettre de Pierre et la tradition évangélique", *Mysterium regni, Ministerium Verbi*. Scritti in onore di mons. Vittorio Fusco (ed. E. FRANCO) (Bologna 2000) 625.

¹⁰⁷ And then he concludes: "man muß m.E. ernsthaft damit rechnen, daß 1 Petr Mt voraussetzt" — U. Luz, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus* (EKKNT1/1-4; Zürich – Neukirchen-Vluyn 1985) I, 76.

¹⁰⁸ Cf. METZNER, *Die Rezeption des Matthäusevangelium im 1. Petrusbrief*, 33.

¹⁰⁹ Cf. RAMSEY MICHAELS, *1 Peter*, 262.

consequences of His words. The early Christian community needed to give a sense to the cross: the core of the church's kerygma was considered by both Jews and Gentiles an absurd and foolish event. The antiquity and wide diffusion of the theme in NT writings favor its origin in Jesus Himself and such an invitation to rejoice just in suffering agrees well with the contents of His frequently paradoxical teaching¹¹⁰.

Jesus' sayings in Matt 5,11-12 / Luke 6,22-23 represent the core of His preaching about joy in suffering, which the early church has interpreted and applied to its own circumstances. In this vein, Peter is a full adaptation of Christian thought characterized by an affirmation of present experience as divine blessing and of its Christological basis¹¹¹. How faithfully has 1 Pet kept Jesus' *logia*? Or better, what about the authenticity of these sayings? As regards the motive of joy in suffering, to which 1 Pet is closest in form and content, a considerable number of NT scholars would accept it readily. There is in it a knowledge and adaptation of Jesus' *logion* recorded in Matt 5,11-12 and Luke 6,22-23.

More difficult would be establishing a consensus about the expression ἐν ὀνόματι Χριστοῦ (1 Pet 4,14a), which is seen by some scholars as a redaction of Jesus' saying in the last beatitude of Matt/Luke. That could derive from an independent oral tradition¹¹², where ὀνειδίξειν is linked with similar causal phrases ἔνεκεν ἐμοῦ (Matt) and ἔνεκα τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου (Luke). Several NT passages put together the idea of suffering and its association with Christ¹¹³. The Petrine statement reflects the traditional idea that such an association will result in the same treatment that Jesus himself encountered.

Why joy in suffering? What meaning did such an attitude have in early Christianity? Surely, it was not a search for pleasure in the midst of pain. Nobody could bear it without a motive. It would be rather an expression of happiness in the disciple who follows the steps of Christ, who walks on the pathway run by Him.

¹¹⁰ Cf. DUPONT, *Béatitudes* II, 344-345.

¹¹¹ Cf. N. BROX, "Der erste Petrusbrief in der literarischen Tradition des Urchristentums", *Kairos* 20 (1978) 214.

¹¹² Cf. DAVIES – ALLISON, *Matthew* I, 463.

¹¹³ Matt 10,18/Mark 13,13; Matt 10,22; 19,29; 24,9/Luke 21,17. They are preceded by the prepositions ἔνεκεν / ἔνεκα, διὰ, ὑπέρ.

Can this tradition go back to Jesus? Even though the elements concerning joy and suffering are present in the preaching of Jesus and the whole *logion* bears a deep Christological dimension, there are some difficulties concerning its authenticity¹¹⁴. According to Bultmann, persecution in itself could lie beyond what Jesus expected¹¹⁵. However, accepting the possibility of a Messianic conscience would help to recognize that Jesus could foreknow in some sense the consequences of His sacrifice and self-giving through suffering. The last beatitude and its development in the early Christian community shows a redactional *milieu*, which emphasizes the eschatological dimension of the proclaimed kingdom and the person of Jesus speaking with the authority of God¹¹⁶. Some parallels are present in Jewish apocalyptic writings, but none of those texts are able to express God's age of salvation and grace that comes in the announcement of the blessings. The words of this last beatitude go back to Jesus insofar as they caused a great stir in the early Christian community. And 1 Pet is a good witness of that reality.

Pontificia Università della Santa Croce
Via dei Farnesi, 82 - 00186 Roma

Bernardo ESTRADA

SUMMARY

The motive of joy in suffering for Jesus' sake, makes the last beatitude in Matt 5,11-12 and Luke 6,22-23 different from the former blessings. The persecution form present in this beatitude seems to be an authentic saying of Jesus, subsequently widespread in NT literature. Such a motive, in fact, does not appear in Judaism and in intertestamental or in apocryphal literature. The First Letter of Peter is instead a special witness of "joy in suffering".

¹¹⁴ Cf. DUPONT, *Béatitudes* II, 380.

¹¹⁵ Cf. R. BULTMANN, *Die Geschichte der synoptischen Tradition* (Göttingen 1961) 115: "Traditionsstück (...) *ex eventu*, und also von der Gemeinde gebildet ist".

¹¹⁶ Cf. SCHWEIZER, *The Good News According to Matthew*, 97.

La conversion de Simon le magicien (Ac 8,4-25)*

Le récit de la conversion de Simon inaugure une série de conversions entre Ac 8 et 11 et se trouve dans une section de transition placée entre juifs (Ac 1-7) et païens (Ac 10-11), entre Jérusalem et Césarée, dans une ville de Samarie. Philippe est le premier missionnaire à opérer *extra muros*, hors de l'orbite des apôtres (8,5). Traditionnellement, les études sur Simon le magicien ont privilégié une approche de type historique décrivant tour à tour Simon comme un gnostique¹, comme un Samaritain², comme un homme divin³, ou encore comme un homme divin rabaissé au rang de magicien par Luc⁴. La rareté des détails historiques du récit ne permet pas à l'historien d'énoncer des conclusions fiables⁵. Sans pour autant abandonner le terrain de l'histoire, mon approche, favorisant une analyse narrative, atteste comment le littéraire et l'histoire s'éclairent mutuellement. La conjugaison de l'un et de l'autre met en évidence la finesse littéraire de Luc qui fait aussi bien appel à la culture judaïsante qu'à la culture gréco-romaine pour démontrer l'impact d'une vision magique au cœur de la foi. Qu'est-ce qu'une vision magique? Comment s'opère-t-elle dans un milieu croyant? Comme à son habi-

* Cet article fait suite à ma thèse qui sera publiée prochainement dans la collection *Lectio Divina*, aux éditions du Cerf. Elle est intitulée: *Philippe l'évangéliste au tournant de la mission dans les Actes des apôtres*. Philippe, Simon le magicien et l'eunuque éthiopien (Lausanne 2008).

¹ G. LÜDEMANN, "The Acts of the Apostles and the Beginnings of Simonian Gnosis", *NTS* 33 (1987) 420-426. L'auteur reprend les points de vue des Pères de l'Église dont JUSTIN, *Apologie* 1,26,3 et IRÉNÉE, *Contre les hérésies* 1,23,2.

² J.E. FOSSUM, *The Name of God and the Angel of the Lord*. Samaritan and Jewish Concepts of Intermediation and the Origin of Gnosticism (WUNT 36; Tübingen 1985) 338.

³ H. CONZELMANN, *Acts of the Apostles* (Hermeneia; Philadelphia, PA 1987) 63.

⁴ E. HAENCHEN, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Philadelphia, PA 1971) 307.

⁵ S. HAAR, *Simon Magus*. The First Gnostic? (BZNW 119; Berlin - New York 2003) 306.

tude, Luc ne livre pas une réflexion systématique⁶, mais provoque la réflexion au moyen d'un récit qui maintient le suspense jusqu'au bout. Simon s'est-il converti? Cette question servira de fil conducteur à mon exégèse.

Mon approche se déroulera en trois temps: d'abord, je me focaliserai sur la construction mimétique de Philippe et Simon, qui tout en débouchant sur la victoire de la foi sur la magie, laisse planer le doute sur les véritables motivations du magicien; ensuite, j'aborderai la demande de Simon à Pierre laquelle expose de manière encore plus brutale l'ambiguïté entre la foi et la magie; finalement, lors de l'intervention de Pierre aucun doute n'est permis: Simon, condamné dans les règles d'un syllogisme aristotélicien et par un traitement burlesque inspiré de la tragi-comédie de Plaute, est un charlatan à qui, cependant, le pardon est offert.

I. Simon le magicien dans la geste de Philippe (8,4-13)

L'épisode de 8,4-13 se présente comme une construction anachronique. Simon, qui opérait en premier en Samarie, est présenté en second après Philippe. Lors de la présentation de Philippe (vv. 5-8), le lecteur ne soupçonnait pas que Simon était déjà en Samarie. C'est seulement au moment d'arriver au récit de Simon (vv. 9-11) que le lecteur le découvre. L'apparition de Simon est brutale, car elle vient interrompre la geste de Philippe qui gagnait les Samaritains à la cause de Jésus (v. 8). Surpris, le lecteur est projeté dans une situation de conflit à laquelle il ne s'attendait pas. Paradoxalement, ce conflit n'apparaît ni dans la geste de Philippe ni dans celle de Simon. Tout se passe à distance dans une construction mimétique où la figure de Simon (vv. 9-11) est calquée sur celle de Philippe (vv. 5-8.12-13).

1. *La présentation mimétique de Philippe et Simon*

Les deux sont nommés au début de leur geste respective (vv. 5.9); les deux sont dans la ville de Samarie (vv. 5.8.9), les deux

⁶ E. PLÜMACHER, *Lukas als hellenistischer Schriftsteller*. Studien zur Apostelgeschichte (SUNT 9; Göttingen 1972) 81.

opèrent par des paroles (vv. 5.9) et par des actions (vv. 6.9.11). Les deux s'attachent les Samaritains (vv. 6.10.11); toute la Samarie est à leurs pieds. Dans l'orbite de Philippe, le texte mentionne "les foules" (v. 6), "des hommes et des femmes" (v. 12), et dans celle de Simon, on les voit "tous" s'attacher à lui (v. 10) et "du petit au grand" (v. 10). Une telle présentation traduit parfaitement la proximité de la foi et de la magie, puisque les deux opèrent par des paroles et des actes. Chez les deux, les paroles sont désignées par le verbe λέγω "dire" (vv. 6.9); chez Philippe, les actes sont appelés σημεῖα "signes" (vv. 6.13) et chez Simon μαγεία "magie" (v. 11). Une telle proximité produit la confusion, car les deux protagonistes sont puissants: Philippe opère "des actes puissants" selon le point de vue de Simon (v. 13) et Simon est reconnu comme "la grande puissance" (v. 10). Finalement, la confusion engendre l'ambiguïté, puisque le récit emploie le même verbe προσέχω "s'attacher" (vv. 6.10.11) pour dire l'attachement des Samaritains aux deux protagonistes: "les foules s'attachaient unanimes aux paroles de Philippe, comme ils ont entendu et vu les signes" (v. 6) et par ailleurs, "ils s'attachaient à lui (Simon) parce que depuis longtemps il les avait stupéfiés par les sortilèges" (v. 11). Dans les deux cas, le lien entre le thaumaturge et le public est produit par des manifestations visibles et extérieures⁷. Les Samaritains "s'attachent" aux paroles de Philippe parce qu'ils ont vu des actes merveilleux décrits comme des phénomènes que l'on peut non seulement voir mais aussi entendre⁸, de même, les Samaritains "s'attachent" à Simon, émerveillés par ses sortilèges que l'on pouvait voir. Les mêmes causes produisant les mêmes effets, l'on ne peut déceler de différence d'attachement selon la foi et selon la magie.

a) La teneur de la proclamation de Simon

L'étude lexicale et sémantique de la titulature ἡ δύναμις τοῦ θεοῦ ἡ καλουμένη μεγάλη "la puissance de Dieu appelée la

⁷ HAAR, *Simon Magus*, 167-168.

⁸ C.K. BARRETT, *The Acts of the Apostles* (ICC; London 2004) I, 399. L'auteur corrige la syntaxe en attribuant le complément "ses paroles" au verbe "voir" afin de donner plus de fluidité à la phrase. En revanche, je partage l'avis de HAENCHEN, *Acts*, 302, qui maintient "signes" comme seul complément aussi bien pour les verbes "voir" que "entendre".

grande” (v. 9b), dans un contexte samaritain et dans la réception de la figure de Simon montre que le magicien avait des prétentions divines.

b) L'étude lexicale et sémantique

Derrière la figure d'un magicien que l'on proclame ἡ δύναμις τοῦ θεοῦ ἡ καλουμένη μεγάλη “la puissance de Dieu appelée la grande” (v. 9b), l'on peut déceler une titulature divine en enlevant ἡ καλουμένη “appelée” et τοῦ θεοῦ “de Dieu”. En effet, le participe adjectival ἡ καλουμένη “appelée” a été justement perçu comme appartenant au langage lucanien, car sur 24 emplois dans le NT pour nommer ou qualifier une chose ou une personne, 21 se retrouvent dans Lc-Ac⁹. Quand le nom propre est employé avec l'adjectif καλουμένη, comme dans le cas de Marie (Lc 8,2) ou de Simon (Lc 6,15), la spécification permet de singulariser la personne. Au milieu de plusieurs Marie et de plusieurs Simon, Marie devient Marie Madeleine et ne se confond pas avec d'autres Marie, de même Simon devient Simon le zélote et ne se confond pas avec Simon Pierre. Dans les exemples cités, καλουμένη peut être enlevé sans que l'élimination n'entame le sens. On aboutirait alors à ἡ δύναμις τοῦ θεοῦ ἡ μεγάλη “la Grande Puissance de Dieu”. Par ailleurs, les exégètes considèrent aussi τοῦ θεοῦ “de Dieu” comme une glose lucanienne. Lake et Cadbury¹⁰ en justifient l'élimination en montrant comment dans le parallèle avec Lc 22,69, Luc maintient τοῦ θεοῦ alors que Mc 14,62 et Mt 26,64 le suppriment. On retrouve le complément τοῦ θεοῦ avec Χριστός en Lc 9,20 et Lc 23,35, alors que les parallèles (Mt 16,16 et Mc 8,29 et Mc 15,32¹¹) l'éliminent et gardent seulement Χριστός. De plus, chez Eusèbe de Césarée¹², on retrouve le même phénomène dans un texte qui cite Hégisippe, rapportant les paroles de Jacques où Dieu est qualifié de “Grande Puissance” sans le complément “de Dieu”. Le même constat peut être fait dans la littérature hellénistique où “la

⁹ Lc 1,36; 6,15; 7,11; 8,2; 9,10; 10,39; 19,2.19; 21,37; 22,3; 23,33; Ac 1,12.23; 3,11; 7,58; 8,10; 9,11; 10,1; 13,1; 15,22; 27,14; Ap 1,9; 12,19; 16,16.

¹⁰ K. LAKE – H.J. CADBURY, *The Beginnings of Christianity* I. The Acts of the Apostles (eds. F.J.F. JACKSON – K. LAKE) (London 1933) IV, 90.

¹¹ Mt y ajoute υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ.

¹² EUSEBE DE CESAREE, *Histoire ecclésiastique* 2,23,13

Grande Puissance” est repérable sur une inscription lydienne¹³ et dans un papyrus magique¹⁴ pour désigner la divinité. Il ne fait pas de doute que Luc dévoile au lecteur qu’à Simon est associé une titulature attribuée au divin¹⁵. Est-ce que ce titre est attribué à Simon par les Samaritains ou provient-il de Simon lui-même? L’emploi du titre dans un discours indirect — “tous (...) disant qu’il est la Puissance de Dieu” — rend les deux propositions plausibles. Il se peut que les Samaritains lui attribuent ce titre après avoir vu ses actes et paroles ou alors il se peut que Simon lui-même s’en soit vêtu¹⁶.

c) L’emploi de la titulature dans un contexte samaritain

Quelle serait la pertinence de revendiquer une titulature divine dans le contexte samaritain? La prétention de Simon s’inscrit dans l’attente eschatologique des Samaritains. Le terme Messie n’appartient pas au vocabulaire samaritain. Dans les écrits samaritains, il est connu comme *Taheb* “le convertisseur”¹⁷. Le *Taheb* reflète une conception eschatologique enracinée dans l’image du prophète comme Moïse telle qu’on la trouve en Dt 18,18 et aussi en 18,15: “C’est un prophète comme toi que je leur susciterai du milieu de leurs frères; je mettrai mes paroles dans sa bouche, et il leur dira tout ce que je lui ordonnerai.” Cette croyance n’est pas typiquement samaritaine, car les juifs aussi la partagent, mais elle deviendra l’ossature principale de leur eschatologie. Le retour du prophète comme Moïse se fera sur le mont Garizim selon l’addition d’Ex 20,17 et la transformation de Ebal en Garizim en Dt 27,4 dans le Pentateuque samaritain, qui remonte en 142-153 av. J.-C. Ce sont les différences majeures entre la Torah juive et le texte samaritain¹⁸. Un fait historique rapporté par Flavius Josèphe attestant que Moïse était le prophète attendu par les Samaritains. Il y a eu un prophète qui,

¹³ J. KEIL – A. VON PREMESTEIN, *Bericht über eine zweite Reise in Lydien* (Wien 1911) 109.

¹⁴ K. PREISENDANZ, *Papyri Graecae Magicae* (1928) IV, 1275.

¹⁵ FOSSUM, *The Name of bool* 169.

¹⁶ HAAR, *Simon Magus*, 223. Des exégètes suggèrent que derrière οὗτος ἔστιν “il est”, on pourrait aussi entendre la propre voix de Simon ἐγὼ εἰμὶ “je suis”.

¹⁷ F. DEXINGER, “Samaritan Eschatology”, *The Samaritans* (ed. A.D. CROWN) (Tübingen 1989) 268.

¹⁸ R.T. ANDERSON, “Samaritan Literature”, *The Samaritans* (ed. A.D. CROWN) (Tübingen 1989) 390-391.

sous Ponce Pilate en 36 A.D, prétendait retrouver les vases sacrés du temple cachés par Moïse sur le Mt. Garizim. Il se présentait comme le successeur eschatologique de Moïse¹⁹.

d) La réception de la figure de Simon

La réception de la figure de Simon dans le roman pseudo-clémentin, composé de deux documents *Homélie*s et *Reconnaisances* (3^{ème} et 4^{ème} siècle), atteste aussi que Simon se prenait pour le successeur de Moïse. Dans Hom II, 23, 1-7 et Rec II, 11,2-4, Simon reprend la titulature “Celui qui se tient debout” *στηθι μετ’ ἐμου* ou “L’Immuable” que Dt 5,31 attribue à Moïse et qu’avant lui, Dosithée²⁰, reconnu comme un prophète samaritain (Rec I, 54, 3-5) s’était attribué. Ainsi, la titulature “Se tenir debout” est analogue à “La Grande Puissance de Dieu”. Ce sont deux titres messianiques. Simon a usurpé ce titre devant les Samaritains en se proclamant “La Puissance appelée la Grande”, titre qui se confond avec le *Χριστός* que Philippe annonce. Le conflit ne se situe pas entre Philippe et Simon, mais porte sur l’identité du vrai prophète comme Moïse: *Χριστός* ou Simon. Dans le contexte messianique, le verbe *προϋπάρχω* (v. 9), employé pour définir une présence antérieure de Simon en Samarie, ne renvoie pas uniquement à sa présence physique, mais revêt le sens premier de “exister avant” et renvoie à la pré-existence²¹ de Simon.

e) La victoire de Philippe sur Simon

Bien que le terme *μαγεύων* “pratiquer la magie” (v. 9a) ne revête pas d’emblée un sens pejoratif²², le narrateur ne laisse pas

¹⁹ FLAVIUS JOSEPHE, *Antiquités Juives* 18,85-89.

²⁰ Dosithée est le fondateur d’une secte samaritaine qu’Abu’l Fathah, le chroniqueur samaritain du 14^{ème} siècle de notre ère, situe au temps de la destruction du temple de Garizim par Hyrcan. Cependant, dans le roman pseudo-clémentin, il est situé au premier siècle au temps du Simon des Actes, c’est-à-dire au milieu du premier siècle de notre ère. Le premier siècle est préférable car “les Samaritains ont post-daté la fondation de la secte de trois siècles”. FOSSUM, *The Name of God*, 47.

²¹ BLASS – DEBRUNNER § 414.

²² F. HEINTZ, *Simon “le magicien”*. Actes 8,5-25 et l’accusation de magie contre les prophètes thaumaturges dans l’Antiquité (CRB 39; Paris 1997) 30-31. L’auteur distingue entre la magie “imputée” où le magicien est accusé d’une activité prohibitive et la magie “revendiquée” où le magicien assume pleine-

planer longtemps le doute sur la portée magique des actes de Simon. Luc règle le cas-Simon en racontant par trois procédés narratifs comment les Samaritains sont sortis des griffes du magicien.

D'abord, par le procédé de l'éclusion²³ où l'on passe de la joie (v. 8) à la foi des Samaritains au v. 12 sans se soucier de la geste de Simon. Ensuite, l'emploi de la conjonction ὅτε "quand" (v. 12) laisse entendre que les Samaritains ne sont pas venus tout de suite à la foi, mais seulement après un certain laps de temps. Rien n'est dit de ce laps de temps. L'ellipse narrative ignore de nouveau Simon. Le troisième procédé vient corriger l'effet élusif et elliptique par l'emploi de deux verbes qui se font face lors de la transition aux vv. 11 et 12. Du côté de Simon l'on trouve ἐξεστακέναι "stupéfier" (v. 11) et du côté de Philippe le verbe ἐπίστευσαν "ils crurent" (v. 12). Les deux verbes sont séparés par le pronom αὐτούς "les", mettant les Samaritains au centre du conflit et la conjonction temporelle ὅτε "quand", soulignant par la durée, l'âpreté du duel. Pour la première fois, les mots qui se tenaient à distance sont juxtaposés et traduisent deux perspectives diamétralement opposées. Le premier, ἐξεστακέναι, souligne la crédulité et l'aveuglement des Samaritains sous l'emprise de Simon et le second, ἐπίστευσαν, la foi des Samaritains dans les paroles de Philippe. Le temps des deux verbes fait ressortir de manière significative le conflit total.

L'emploi de ἐξεστακέναι, seul parfait employé au sens actif en 8,4-13²⁴, désigne une action passée qui a toujours effet dans le présent²⁵. En d'autres mots, Simon exerçait toujours une fascination sur les Samaritains par ses sortilèges jusqu'à ce que Philippe vienne libérer ces derniers de l'emprise du magicien. Par ailleurs, l'emploi de l'aoriste ἐπίστευσαν "ils crurent" qui, lui, succède à ἐξεστακέναι, désigne un point défini dans le passé et par conséquent,

ment son activité comme honorable. Il se peut que Simon se soit lui-même présenté comme un magicien que Luc a disqualifié.

²³ G. GENETTE, *Figures* III (Poétique; Paris 1972) 104: "L'éclusion la plus audacieuse consiste à oublier le caractère analeptique du segment narratif dans lequel on se trouve, et à prolonger ce segment en quelque sorte indéfiniment pour lui-même sans se soucier du point où il vient rejoindre le récit".

²⁴ Παραλελυμένοι (v. 7) est l'autre parfait employé comme substantif au passif.

²⁵ BLASS – DEBRUNNER § 340: "le parfait renferme, pour ainsi dire, le présent et l'aoriste car il dénote la continuité dans le présent d'une action accomplie".

montre bien que l'influence de Simon a été anéantie au profit de celle de Philippe. Désormais, "ils crurent" et "ils étaient baptisés" sont les derniers verbes employés pour décrire l'état présent des Samaritains libérés de Simon.

L'emploi du participe présent εὐαγγελιζομένων "annonçant la Bonne Nouvelle" (v. 12) succédant aux deux autres participes rattachés à la séquence de Simon – μαγεύων ("pratiquant la magie" v. 9) et ἐξιστάνων ("stupéfiant" v. 9), apporte "l'estocade finale". Arrivé au récit du baptême de Simon au v. 13, le lecteur a déjà une idée claire et nette de la magie. Chez le magicien, le pouvoir est auto-fondé, car il n'annonce que lui-même; chez le missionnaire, c'est un Autre qui est annoncé, et celui qui proclame n'est que l'instrument comme le démontre l'emploi du passif ἐβαπτίζοντο "étaient baptisés" (v. 12) et la non-mention de l'agent.

2. La conversion de Simon (v. 13)

Le v. 13 pose de manière cruciale le problème de la conversion de Simon: Est-ce que Simon s'est converti? Le débat est très âpre sur cette question. On fait souvent appel à Irénée pour parler de sa non-foi: "Ce Simon donc feignit d'embrasser la foi. Il pensa que les apôtres eux aussi opéraient des guérisons par la magie, et non par la puissance de Dieu²⁶". La remarque d'Irénée relit le v. 13 à la lumière de la demande de Simon d'acheter le don de l'Esprit aux vv. 18-19. Ainsi, il court-circuite la première partie du v. 13 qui emploie les mêmes verbes πιστεύω et βαπτίζω "croire et baptiser" pour désigner aussi bien la conversion des Samaritains que celle de Simon. Il nous faut d'abord revenir sur la manière dont le récit pose ses repères.

a) Simon s'est converti

Les verbes ἐπίστευσαν "ils crurent" et ἐπίστευσεν "il crut", tous deux placés au début des vv. 12 et 13 et employés à l'aoriste, sont en parallèle strict. Aux vv. 12.13, Luc instaure un rapport de causalité ou séquentiel entre foi et baptême. "Quand (ὅτε) ils crurent (...) ils recevaient le baptême" (v.12); "Simon lui-même crut et il reçut le baptême" (v. 13). L'identité des mots dans une

²⁶ IRÉNÉE, *Contre les hérésies* 1,23,1.

construction parallèle, offre une même compréhension des événements. L'adhésion des Samaritains aux œuvres et aux paroles de Philippe est suivie de celle de Simon. Par l'action de Philippe, le même terme attribué aux Samaritains et à Simon offre un même sens positif. On peut conclure à la conversion de Simon comme le soutient D. Marguerat, "il n'y a pas lieu de mettre en doute la sincérité de sa foi et de son baptême²⁷". De plus, le pronom αὐτός enlève toute équivocité par la redondance du sujet qui met l'accent sur l'engagement de Simon²⁸ et aussi par le καί qu'on peut traduire par "même": "même Simon a cru et a reçu le baptême²⁹". Aucun doute n'est possible à ce stade.

b) Le glissement vers la magie

Le récit de Simon au v. 13 ne s'arrête pas à sa conversion, contrairement au récit des Samaritains qui finit sur leur baptême au v. 12. Après son baptême, "il (Simon) s'attachait à Philippe; observant les signes et les grandes puissances accomplies, il était stupéfait" (v. 13b). L'attachement de Simon à Philippe, au lieu d'être médiatisé par un enseignement comme les Samaritains à la Parole de Philippe (v. 12), se trouve occulté au profit du merveilleux et d'une relation directe avec la personne de Philippe. Au lieu d'écouter la Parole, il se met à "regarder" θεωρῶν; au lieu de s'attacher à la proclamation, il reste attiré par "les signes et les grands actes de puissance" σημεῖα καὶ δυνάμεις μεγάλας (v. 13). Le terme μέγαν "grand" (v. 9) réemployé au v. 13 traduit un transfert significatif. D'abord, il s'est dit "grand" μέγαν (v. 9); ensuite les Samaritains disent qu'il est la personnification de la "grande" puissance de Dieu, μεγάλη (v. 10) et finalement il est fasciné "aux grandes œuvres" de Philippe δυνάμεις μεγάλας (v. 13). Le terme passe de sa personne à son pouvoir et aux œuvres de Philippe, mais demeure dans le registre de l'éclat, de la mégalomanie. Simon, malgré un passage à la foi, reste toujours attiré par les "signes et les actes de puissance", ce qui laisse entendre une fixation sur un objet.

²⁷ D. MARGUERAT, *La première histoire du christianisme* (LD 180; Paris – Genève 2003) 203.

²⁸ HAAR, *Simon Magus*, 179. L'auteur souligne le rôle emphatique du pronom.

²⁹ M. ZERWICK – M. GROSVENOR, *A Grammatical Analysis of the Greek New Testament* (Rome 1996) 376.

L'univers de Simon a fait irruption dans celui de Philippe et se confond avec ce dernier.

Au fur et à mesure que le lecteur avance dans le v. 13b, le soupçon grandit. Le verbe βαπτίζω est au passif aussi bien au v. 12 qu'au v. 13. Passif imparfait pour les Samaritains ἐβαπτίζοντο et passif aoriste pour Simon βαπτισθείς. L'imparfait exprime la durée, alors que l'aoriste désigne un point dans le passé. Au v. 12, le récit clôt sur le baptême des Samaritains qui demeure l'action dans laquelle les Samaritains sont enracinés. Désormais, ils sont en train de vivre de leur baptême. En revanche, la foi et le baptême de Simon ouvrent la section consacrée à sa conversion avant d'embrayer sur des imparfaits ἦν προσκαρτερῶν "s'attachait" et ἐξίστατο "était stupéfait", qui dénotent un nouvel état d'esprit contraire à son baptême. Le verbe ἐξίστημι "stupéfier", le seul qui appartienne à la geste de Simon, y revient trois fois. Il est toujours employé au sens transitif ici, contrairement aux autres emplois dans les Actes³⁰. Selon Bauer³¹, il peut même signifier "mettre quelqu'un dans un état second", évoquant l'idée de dépendance des Samaritains envers le magicien³², comme Simon dépend des signes et des actes de puissance de Philippe. Le verbe est toujours relié au voir. Donc Simon reste enfermé dans l'éclat du signe.

Le verbe ἐξίστατο "était stupéfait" (v. 13b) en position finale dans le verset, s'oppose à ἐβαπτίζοντο "étaient baptisés" qui est en position finale au v. 12b. L'opposition ἐβαπτίζοντο et ἐξίστατο (vv. 12.13) évoque un même *pattern* que ἐξεστακέναι (v. 11) et ἐπίστευσαν (v. 12). Elle reproduit la *Weltanschauung* du monde religieux des vv. 11-12, opposant une vision magique à une vision de foi. Simon est en train de régresser et de pervertir le sens du vocabulaire de la foi en le ramenant à son θεωρέω "voir" (v. 13). Le passage sans transition de βαπτίζω à l'emploi ambigu de προσκαρτερέω dénote un glissement de Simon vers la fascination devant le merveilleux. Il a répercuté son regard de magicien sur le monde de Philippe. Il ne s'attache pas à ce à quoi le signe renvoie,

³⁰ Ac 2,7; 9,21; 10,45; 12,16.

³¹ W. BAUER, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* (Chicago, IL 1979) 276.

³² HEINTZ, *Simon "le magicien"*, 138. L'auteur ose parler "d'ensorcellement massif".

mais à la personne. Le narrateur “ne dénigre pas sa foi, mais en suggère la fissure, que le conflit avec Pierre va révéler³³”.

Ainsi, le parallélisme entre les vv. 12 et 13 exprime la conversion de Simon, alors que la suite du v. 13 traduit un glissement vers l'univers magique. Le narrateur ne donne pas à voir clairement un renoncement à la foi, mais la complexité du personnage que Luc peint en clair obscur et jamais en blanc et noir. La première réflexion sur la conversion de Simon fait ressortir l'impact de la magie dans l'univers de la foi. Elle suggère comment la magie est l'obstacle le plus redoutable par sa capacité de tromper. Elle peut entrer dans la maison du propriétaire, s'y installant comme un ami afin de s'accaparer de ses biens. La magie sème la confusion dans les esprits parce qu'elle emploie les mêmes armes que la foi. Le signe étant ambigu de nature rend la magie redoutable. Cette première étape nous prépare à affronter l'aveu clair de Simon qui est retombé aux vv. 18-19 dans sa vision magique du religieux.

II. La demande de Simon (vv. 14-17 et 18-19)

Simon et Philippe, aux vv. 9-11 et 4-8, menaient des activités semblables, décrites à l'aide d'un vocabulaire parfois similaire, comme nous l'avons déjà vu. Mais aux vv. 14-17 et 18-19, non seulement il s'agit du même événement, mais le vocabulaire pneumatologique est commun à Simon et aux apôtres. Il est frappant de constater comment le parallélisme reprend textuellement, à l'exception de la prière, trois éléments centraux des vv. 14-17: “imposition des mains” (vv. 17.18.19), “recevoir et donner” (vv. 15.17.18.19), “Esprit” et “Esprit Saint” (vv. 15.17.18.19). Par sa gestion de l'information, le narrateur présente un Simon qui prétend agir comme les apôtres en lui attribuant un vocabulaire pneumatologique plus riche. De plus, l'absence de rupture narrative, entre les vv. 14-17 et les vv. 18-19 reliés par une subordonnée temporelle introduite par “voyant” ἰδὼν, renforce le parallélisme et l'ambiguïté.

³³ D. MARGUERAT, *Les Actes des apôtres (1-12)* (CNT 5a; Genève 2007) 294.

1. *La construction mimétique entre Simon et Pierre*

– Dans la geste de Simon (vv. 18-19), deux verbes sont employés pour dire la réception de l'Esprit par les Samaritains: “recevoir” et “donner”. Ce sont deux verbes consacrés dans les Actes pour parler de l'arrivée de l'Esprit³⁴. En revanche, dans la geste des apôtres aux vv. 14-17, seul “recevoir” est employé.

– De la même manière, le terme “Esprit” peut être employé tout court (11 fois dans les Actes) ou encore dans la forme longue “l'Esprit Saint” (41 fois dans les Actes). Une fois de plus, les deux expressions sont employées aux vv. 18-19 contre uniquement “l'Esprit Saint” dans la séquence des apôtres (vv. 15.17).

– L'Esprit peut être employé avec ou sans article. On trouve les deux formules aux vv. 18-19, contre la formule sans article dans la geste des apôtres aux vv. 15.17.

– Dans la geste de Simon, le don de l'Esprit est exprimé aussi bien au passif δίδοται “est donné” (v. 18) comme en 10,45, “avait été répandu” ἐκκέχυται qu'à l'actif λαμβάνη “il reçoit” v. 19; dans la geste de Pierre, on ne trouve que l'emploi de l'actif (vv. 15.17).

Ainsi, en quatre occasions, les versets liés à Simon enrichissent le vocabulaire de l'Esprit sans qu'il y ait de différence en règle absolue en Lc-Ac entre “donner” et “recevoir”, entre l'Esprit et l'Esprit Saint, entre l'absence ou la présence de l'article, entre l'emploi du passif ou de l'actif. L'identité de vision entre Simon et les apôtres aux vv. 14-19 est plus fortement soulignée que celle entre Philippe et Simon.

Aussi bien dans la séquence des apôtres que dans celle de Simon, la venue de l'Esprit est évoquée comme le résultat d'une action par l'emploi d'une conjonction qui exprime la finalité “afin que”. La conjonction ὅπως “afin qu'ils reçoivent l'Esprit Saint” est employée avec les apôtres (v. 15) et ἵνα “afin que ceux à qui j'impose les mains” avec Simon (v. 19b). Par ailleurs, la conjonction de coordination καί “et” (v. 17), appartenant à la séquence de Pierre et Jean, peut être comprise comme une locution qui introduit le sens d'une consécution que l'on peut rendre par “de sorte que” ou “ainsi”³⁵: “Pierre et

³⁴ “Donner” est employé en 15,8 par Pierre devant l'assemblée de Jérusalem.

³⁵ BAUER, 392-394.

Jean se mirent à leur imposer les mains de sorte que les Samaritains reçussent l'Esprit". Donc, du point de vue sémantique, καί se rapproche de ἵνα confondant le faire des apôtres avec l'interprétation qu'en donne Simon. Ainsi, il n'est pas aisé de différencier entre la conception que les apôtres et Simon ont de l'Esprit.

On peut pousser plus loin l'analyse de l'ambiguïté. Rien ne permet du premier coup de faire la différence entre l'emploi du syntagme verbal "ils imposaient les mains" ἐπετίθεσαν τὰς χειρὰς (v. 17) et celui du syntagme substantivé "par l'imposition des mains" διὰ τῆς ἐπιθέσεως τῶν χειρῶν (v. 18a). La différence est syntaxique et non sémantique. On constate également que la notion de "pouvoir" ἐξουσία (v. 19) dont parle Simon ne détonne pas dans la péricope, car il a bien été question des signes qui sont opérés avec puissance par Philippe (v. 13)³⁶. Par ailleurs, même si Simon s'approprie la performance d'imposer les mains par l'emploi du "je", il montre qu'il ne désire pas cette performance pour lui-même, mais pour que "ceux à qui [il] impose les mains, reçoivent l'Esprit" (v. 19b). Simon veut le pouvoir pour autrui, comme le souligne R. Tannehill³⁷. Il se montre désintéressé, ne cherchant pas sa propre gloire, contrairement aux vv. 9-11 où il se présente comme "la grande puissance". Cette série de faits souligne la proximité entre l'action de Simon et celle des apôtres et engendre davantage l'ambiguïté. Par le procédé de l'enrichissement du vocabulaire pneumatologique des vv. 14-19, par une syntaxe voisine, le récit fait apparaître une question fondamentale: est-ce que l'Esprit serait la conséquence d'une manipulation humaine?

2. La vision magique de Simon

Il n'est pas si aisé de repérer la faille chez Simon. Pourtant, l'idée que Pierre et Jean se font de la réception de l'Esprit est claire et nette. Dès qu'ils entrent en action au v. 15, ils prient pour que les Samaritains reçoivent l'Esprit. Que signifie "prier"? La prière se tourne vers l'Auteur du pouvoir et institue les apôtres comme les médiateurs. On prie pour que Dieu se manifeste, pour qu'il montre son assentiment à

³⁶ On retrouve les termes δυνάμις et ἐξουσία en Lc 4,36; 9,1 et 10,19. Ce "pouvoir" ἐξουσία est donné par Jésus aux apôtres (Lc 9,1) et à Paul (26,18).

³⁷ R.C. TANNEHILL, *The Narrative Unity of Luke-Acts. A Literary Interpretation* (Minneapolis, MN 1994) II, 107.

un événement en guérissant (9,40), en choisissant (1,24), en confirmant un choix (6,6), en indiquant le chemin de la mission (10,9). Ici, la prière est faite “pour eux” *περὶ αὐτῶν* c’est-à-dire les Samaritains. La prière s’élève pour que Dieu agisse en faveur des Samaritains. La prière est la marque par excellence de l’orant qui se dépossède d’un pouvoir pour qu’opère l’action de Dieu.

Simon a dénaturé une telle vision. Avant même qu’il ne parle, son geste est révélateur de ses intentions profondes: “il leur offrit de l’argent” *προσήνεγκεν αὐτοῖς χρήματα*. L’offre d’argent constitue la clé de voûte du magicien aux vv. 18-19. C’est à partir de là que peut s’interpréter l’ensemble. Le rapport de cause à effet que Simon établit entre l’imposition des mains et le don de l’Esprit signifie bien que c’est grâce au rite acheté et opéré par un agent humain qu’on obtient un résultat. La puissance réside entre les mains de l’individu, sujet du rite, capable de solliciter le divin. La divinité est à son service. Il veut le pouvoir d’imposer les mains “afin que” *ἵνα* l’Esprit arrive. Les “sortilèges” provenaient de sa compétence, l’autorisant à s’appeler “grand” (v. 9). Ici, l’Esprit est une autre forme de magie qu’il veut domestiquer. Il reproduit le même rapport entre le rite et son origine aux vv. 18-19 et aux vv. 9-11.

Les faits convergent pour stigmatiser la faute de Simon. L’emploi de la première personne du singulier *ἐπιθῶ* “j’impose les mains” (v. 19b) traduit parfaitement la vision de Simon qui se pose comme la source de ce pouvoir. Le fait que ce soit la seule fois dans les Actes que le verbe *ἐπιτίθημι* est à la première personne du singulier confirme sa prétention de faire de l’Esprit son bien propre. L’emploi substantivé de *ἐπιτίθημι* traduit également une perception originale du don de l’Esprit. L’expression *ἐπίθεσις τῶν χειρῶν* pour dire “l’imposition des mains” est unique en Lc-Ac. Simon ne présente-t-il pas le rite comme un objet qu’on possède, propriété que le verbe ne peut rendre? Le magicien opère un court-circuit en ramenant à lui ce qui appartient à la divinité.

Quelles sont les motivations que recèle l’offre de Simon? A ce sujet, les avis sont partagés. Selon Barrett, si Simon était disposé à payer pour obtenir le pouvoir de conférer l’Esprit par l’imposition des mains, il avait certainement l’intention de fixer un prix pour ce produit. Il allait réaliser des bénéfices de son investissement³⁸. Selon

³⁸ C.K. BARRETT, “Light on the Holy Spirit from Simon Magus”, *Les Actes*

Heintz, il n'y a pas directement motif de vénalité contre Simon. "Il n'est dit nulle part, en effet, que Simon récoltait de l'argent pour ses miracles. De même, il est peu probable que Luc ait voulu accuser Simon indirectement (...) de monnayer l'Esprit après coup³⁹". Selon lui,

"la réponse la plus simple est que Simon commet l'erreur impardonnable de confondre les apôtres avec les magiciens, de voir en eux ce qu'il a été lui-même, à savoir des professionnels soucieux d'obtenir le meilleur prix pour leurs formules, leurs talismans et leurs recettes. Cette inversion fictive des rôles, fictive parce qu'elle ne se produit que dans l'esprit de Simon, est un coup de génie de la part de Luc⁴⁰".

Dans cette perspective, les protagonistes sont évalués en termes de hiérarchie. En effet, Pierre et Jean sont désignés par le titre "apôtres" au v. 18. Quoi de plus normal! Ne font-ils pas partie des Douze et ne sont-ils pas appelés les apôtres dès le début des Actes (1,2)? Mais il est étonnant de constater que les Actes n'emploient jamais le terme "apôtres" pour désigner une partie des Douze, comme ce sera le cas dans la section de Pierre et Jean en Ac 8,15.17 où ils sont désignés par "ils". Le terme "apôtres" est employé uniquement en Ac 14,4.14 pour nommer Paul et Barnabé. C'est un cas à part dans les Actes⁴¹. D'où vient alors une telle qualification

des apôtres. Traditions, rédaction, théologie (ed. J. KREMER) (BETHL 48; Gembloux – Leuven 1979) 288.

³⁹ HEINTZ, *Simon "le magicien"*, 126.

⁴⁰ HEINTZ, *Simon "le magicien"*, 126.

⁴¹ L'emploi du titre "apôtres" en 4,4.14 est très débattu. Si en 14,14, l'insertion du terme ἀπόστολοι est considérée comme "douteuse" pour reprendre DUPONT, *Nouvelles études* 115, car le terme est absent du texte occidental, il est, en revanche, bien attesté en 14,4. Ce terme est toujours associé au collectif des Douze apôtres dans les Actes (1,2.26; 2,37.42.43; 4,33.35.36.37; 5,2.12.18.29.40; 6,6; 8,1.14.18; 9,27; 11,1; 15,2.4.6.22.23; 16,4), contrairement aux épîtres de Paul (Ga 1,-17; 1 Co 9,1-2). Est désigné apôtre celui qui a été témoin de la vie de Jésus depuis les débuts (1,21-22). Donc, l'emploi de 14,4 est un cas à part dans les Actes. Comment l'expliquer? La critique historique en justifie l'emploi en faisant appel à une source spécifique: J. ROLOFF, *Die Apostelgeschichte* (NTD 5; Göttingen 1981) 211; F.F. BRUCE, *The Acts of the Apostles*. Greek Text with Introduction and Commentary (Oregon, OR 2000) 318, aussi bien que J.A. FITZMYER, *The Acts of the Apostles* (AB 31; New York 1998) 526 qui considère que c'est le seul argument valable. Comme la justification par les sources ne peut recevoir aucune preuve externe, l'enquête doit se poursuivre auprès de ceux qui cherchent une solution littéraire reflétant une

au v. 18? Certes, le narrateur fournit la qualification qui, en fait, transmet le point de vue subjectif du personnage. Ici, la scène est décrite à travers les yeux de Simon. Il est celui qui “voit” (v. 18). Simon est celui qu’A. Rabatel appellerait le focalisateur c’est-à-dire “l’instance à laquelle rapporter les perceptions⁴²”. Qu’est-ce qu’il voit? Selon sa conception du religieux, comme l’a déjà montré la construction mimétique entre Pierre et Simon précédemment, le magicien voit que l’Esprit descend grâce à l’imposition des mains de Pierre et Jean. Ces derniers sont donc plus forts que lui. Alors, dans sa conception, le mot “apôtres” prend une connotation hiérarchique provenant de son évaluation, de son point de vue que le narrateur fournit au lecteur. “La description fournie par le narrateur est, dans cette situation, étonnamment subjective⁴³”. Dans le système de Simon, l’Esprit est supérieur au baptême et du coup les apôtres sont supérieurs à Philippe. C’est Simon qui introduit l’idée d’un pouvoir supérieur de Pierre et Jean sur Philippe, par l’évaluation qu’il donne au terme “apôtres”. La perception du magicien a pesé de tout son poids dans l’histoire de la réception du texte, pour créer l’atmosphère de supériorité⁴⁴ des apôtres sur Philippe.

pratique dans l’Église du 1^{er} siècle. Ainsi, selon J. BECKER, *Paul: Apostle to the Gentiles* (Westminster 1993) 59.79, Paul et Barnabé sont appelés apôtres dans un sens différent d’Ac 1,21-22, car ici, le terme est proche de 2 Co 8,23 où Tite est envoyé par Paul à l’Église de Corinthe et il est désigné comme apôtre. Il en est de même pour J. DUPONT, *Nouvelles études sur les Actes*, 116, qui reconnaît la spécificité du ministère des Douze et suggère que le terme “apôtres” comporte un sens plus large et équivaut pratiquement à “missionnaire”. Ce terme est toujours dépendant de sa signification originelle, c’est-à-dire réservé aux Douze et lié à Jérusalem. K.H. RENGSTORF, “ἀποστέλλω”, *TNDT I*, 398-446, suggère que les Douze ont été choisis apôtres par Jésus mais que l’idée a été étendue à Paul. Ceci est une extension momentanée afin d’établir la continuité au moment où commence la mission de Paul. Ce dernier argument me semble très pertinent, car le facteur de la continuité dans les Actes est un fait majeur de la mission depuis Jésus en passant par les apôtres, Paul et d’autres missionnaires. Voir MARGUERAT, *La première histoire du christianisme*, 111-122.

⁴² A. RABATEL, “L’introuvable focalisation externe: de la subordination de la vision externe au point de vue du personnage ou au point de vue du narrateur”, *Littérature* 88 (1997) 89; DUPONT, *Nouvelles études sur les Actes*, 115-116.

⁴³ RABATEL, “L’introuvable focalisation externe”, 90-91. J’applique à Ac 8,18 l’analyse du critique littéraire sur le point de vue.

⁴⁴ E. KÄSEMANN, *New Testament Questions of Today* (Philadelphia,

A la lumière des vv. 9-11 et 18-19, le lecteur peut conclure sans ambiguïté que Simon cherche à garder les autres sous son pouvoir de fascination. Étant à l'origine du rite, il se prend pour Dieu ou pour son Messie. Ainsi, le pouvoir du magicien est auto-fondé puisqu'il proviendrait de son savoir-faire. De même que Simon a su intégrer dans son univers l'habit de la religion samaritaine, de même il peut revêtir l'habit religieux chrétien pour amener tout le monde à son système.

3. *Simon a-t-il reçu l'Esprit?*

Pris entre le mimétisme et la dénonciation, comment évaluer le don de l'Esprit sur Simon? Selon Conzelmann⁴⁵, Simon n'a pas reçu l'Esprit, car son attitude au v. 13 est un barrage à la descente de l'Esprit sur lui; en revanche, Barrett⁴⁶ pense qu'il n'y a rien qui suggère que Simon a été écarté de la réception de l'Esprit. L'hésitation des exégètes ne fait que traduire l'ambiguïté entre la geste de Simon et celle des missionnaires. En fait, la narration a soigneusement distingué Simon des Samaritains: au v. 9, il est en face de "la population de Samarie", au v. 10, en face de "tous du petit au grand", au v. 11, le pronom αὐτῶ "ils s'attachaient à lui" renvoie à Simon en face des Samaritains et finalement, le pronom αὐτοῦς "les" (v. 11), renvoie toujours aux Samaritains en face de Simon. La distinction est tellement nette qu'au moment du baptême, la narration sépare les Samaritains (v. 12) de Simon (v.13).

Cependant, en suivant l'intrigue, il est difficile de distinguer entre Simon et les Samaritains à partir du v. 13. Depuis son baptême, Simon fait partie des baptisés. Il est membre de la communauté. Alors le ἡ Σαμάρεια, repris sous la forme du pronom πρὸς αὐτοῦς "vers eux" au v. 14 renvoie à ceux qui sont devenus croyants par le baptême en Samarie. Simon en fait partie et sur lui aussi l'Esprit est tombé. Le narrateur joue sur l'évolution du pronom αὐτός qui renvoie à deux étapes de la narration, la première excluant et la seconde, incluant Simon parmi les habitants de la Samarie. Mais le

PA 1979) 21-22. L'auteur accuse Luc de promouvoir une idéologie proto-catholique qui favorise la hiérarchie et l'institution au détriment de Philippe dont le ministère serait défectueux.

⁴⁵ CONZELMANN, *Acts*, 66.

⁴⁶ BARRETT, *Acts* I, 413. En ceci, l'auteur suit HAENCHEN, *Acts*, 304.

fait que la narration reste silencieuse sur la présence de Simon aux vv. 14-17, alors que le magicien est omniprésent aux vv. 9-11 et 18-24, accentue le suspense et la tension narrative. Par ce non-dit, Simon est toujours perçu comme un personnage fait d'ombre et de lumière, difficilement saisissable. Le flou qui entoure sa personne renvoie à la confusion et l'ambiguïté entre foi et magie. La ligne de démarcation n'est pas claire et nette et peut prendre le croyant crédule au piège de la magie à l'image des Samaritains.

III. La geste de Pierre face à Simon (vv. 20-24)

Dans la dernière partie de mon analyse, Pierre se pose en juge et évalue les actions et paroles du magicien. Le langage de l'apôtre s'enracine aussi bien dans celui des prophètes de l'Ancien Testament⁴⁷ que dans celui de la magie.

1. *La réaction de Pierre*

L'intervention de Pierre oppose le vocabulaire de la "richesse" matérielle χρῆμα et ἀργύριον (vv. 18,20) à celui "du don" δωρεά (v. 20) Simon fait l'objet d'une condamnation: aussi bien "l'argent" τὸ ἀργύριον de Simon (v. 20) que sa "personne" σὺν σοι (v. 20) seront condamnés. Il y a une identification entre le bien matériel et la personne. Simon est réduit à n'être qu'un objet sans valeur, car ce qui a de la valeur à ses yeux sera détruit comme lui.

a) Le péché de Simon

Simon est coupable d'avoir causé des torts à Dieu, "car" ὅτι en voulant acheter le "pouvoir" de donner l'Esprit (v. 19), il a attribué aux apôtres ce qui relève de Dieu, manifestant alors que "son cœur

⁴⁷ Le terme εἰς ἀπώλειαν "à la destruction" (v. 20) est souvent employé dans le livre du Deutéronome (Dt 8,19; 12,2) dans le contexte de l'idolâtrie. YAHVÉ menace son peuple de "destruction" s'il se prosterne devant d'autres dieux. L'expression Simon n'aura "ni part, ni héritage" περὶς οὐδὲ κληροῦς (v. 21) reprend l'expression même de Dt 12,12. Simon est exclu parce que son "cœur n'est pas droit devant Dieu" (v. 21), expression voisine du Ps (78) 77,37 "leur cœur n'est pas droit devant lui". Les deux expressions "l'amertume amère" et "les chaînes de l'iniquité" (v. 23) proviennent directement du Dt 29,17 et d'Is 58,6.

n'est pas droit devant Dieu" ἡ γὰρ καρδία σου οὐκ ἔστιν εὐθεῖα ἔναντι τοῦ θεοῦ (v. 21). Prendre Dieu pour ce qu'il n'est pas, offense sa personne. C'est un crime de lèse-majesté, "c'est un épouvantable sacrilège"⁴⁸. Simon a porté outrage à Dieu lui-même et non pas aux apôtres comme le stipulait la faute d'Ananie et Sapphira, quand ils ont menti aux apôtres. "Tu n'as pas menti aux hommes, mais à Dieu" οὐκ ἐψεύσω ἀνθρώποις ἀλλὰ τῷ θεῷ (5,4).

En voulant acheter l'Esprit, il s'attaque aussi aux apôtres. Il les assimile aux prêtres des temples païens où "le charisme est un attribut du sacerdoce lié à un trafic d'argent"⁴⁹. Or, les apôtres agissent gratuitement et non pour de l'argent. Leur pouvoir est lié à l'Esprit et non à une autorité personnelle. Ils sont les médiateurs entre Dieu et les Samaritains. Leur charisme n'est pas monnayable, alors que la magie est associée à une pratique idolâtrique des temples païens. La contradiction est totale. S'attaquer à Dieu implique s'attaquer à ses témoins. Par conséquent, la sentence la plus lourde doit être réclamée. Cependant, "la destruction" (ἀπώλεια) qui doit tomber sur Simon selon Pierre (v. 20) n'arrive pas. De quelle destruction s'agit-il en 8,20?

b) La destruction de Simon

Comment interpréter le terme ἀπώλεια? L'interprétation est difficile, car ἀπώλεια est un *hapax* de Lc-Ac. Haar tempère la condamnation en suggérant qu'une telle expression ne fait pas référence à une destruction effective, mais à une menace de Pierre pour celui qui va commettre une offense ou a déjà péché⁵⁰. Garrett penche pour une destruction dans la vie éternelle en lien avec la non-conversion du magicien⁵¹. Selon Heintz, Simon est reconnu coupable sous sept lieux communs de l'accusation de magie – sorcellerie, stupeur aliénante des spectateurs, mégalomanie et arrogance du magicien, déification, vénalité et cupidité, méchanceté et perversité, débouchant sur l'annonce du jugement divin⁵². Ces deux dernières positions n'ont pas suffisamment tenu compte du fait que

⁴⁸ HEINTZ, *Simon "le magicien"*, 126.

⁴⁹ J.D.M. DERRETT, "Simon Magus (Acts 8,9-24)", *ZNW* 73 (1982) 52-68.

⁵⁰ HAAR, *Simon Magus*, 185.

⁵¹ S. GARRETT, *The Demise of the Devil. Magic and the Demonic in Luke's Writings* (Minneapolis, MN 1989) 71.

⁵² HEINTZ, *Simon "le magicien"*, 143.

la destruction est introduite par l'emploi du verbe εἰμί à la forme optative εἶη. C'est le seul cas dans tout le NT, exprimant les imprécations sous la forme d'un souhait⁵³. L'optatif désamorce l'effet immédiat de la destruction. Voilà pourquoi, une fois que Garrett a posé l'ἀπώλεια comme une destruction effective de ce qui est annoncé, elle a de la peine à la concilier avec ce qui suit. Comment articuler la demande de destruction avec l'optatif qui la retarde? La remarque de Haenchen doit retenir toute notre attention. L'exégète parle d'ironie lucanienne⁵⁴ car, pour contrer un magicien, Pierre se comporte à son tour comme un magicien. En effet, l'expression ἀπώλεια "destruction" employée par Pierre rappelle les papyri magiques⁵⁵ παραδίδωμι σε τὸ μέλαν χάος ἐν ταῖς ἀπώλειαῖς "je te livre à la nuit du chaos dans la destruction". Le langage magique est renforcé par les expressions χολὴν πικρίας καὶ σύνδεσμον ἀδικίας "l'amertume amère et les chaînes de l'iniquité" (v. 23) qui sonnent ici comme des imprécations d'un magicien à l'égard de celui à qui sont lancés des maléfices. L'ironie est un des vecteurs de la présentation de Simon⁵⁶.

Recourant à une formule magique de malédiction, Pierre emploie contre Simon ses propres armes. Quel est l'effet sur l'auditoire? La sentence, recadrée par le spectateur, produit un effet comique. Se transformant en "magicien", Pierre attire la moquerie sur Simon. Voilà un magicien qui se voit renvoyer à la figure ses propres invectives! Il est alors désarmé et ne peut plus se défendre. Il est pris à son propre piège. En imitant le magicien, l'apôtre s'abaisse au rang de ce dernier et utilise son langage pour le confondre. Cette situation appartient au genre de la parodie. C'est un des ressorts de la comédie que de procéder à une inversion de rôles comme dans le cas où l'esclave devient le maître et se comporte comme ce dernier⁵⁷. Ceci a pour effet de se moquer du maître par le rire et de le dévaloriser aux yeux du public. De même,

⁵³ BLASS – DEBRUNNER § 384.

⁵⁴ HAECHEN, *Acts*, 304.

⁵⁵ *Magic Papyrus* IV, 1249.

⁵⁶ R. PERVO, *Profit with Delight*. The Literary Genre of the Acts of the Apostles (Philadelphia, PA 1987) 59-60. L'auteur signale comment l'humour et l'ironie font partie de la culture lucanienne. On le trouve en Ac 2,12-13; 13,6-12 aussi bien qu'en 8,19-24.

⁵⁷ ARISTOPHANE, *Les Grenouilles*, vv. 494-742.

le vocabulaire du magicien dans la bouche du non-magicien tourne en dérision le magicien.

Du coup la condamnation se trouve déplacée. En effet, elle ne porte pas sur la destruction physique de la personne, mais sur sa réputation. Simon subit l'opprobre du public. Une étude de Neyrey et Malina⁵⁸ a montré, comment au 1^{er} siècle, la notion de l'honneur est centrale dans une société où le groupe a préséance sur l'individu. Selon la division tripartite de Neyrey, la faute de Simon entame sa réputation au premier degré. "Un déshonneur au premier degré est considéré comme un sacrilège et implique une transgression qui sort de l'ordinaire"⁵⁹. Donc, l'ἀπώλεια est bien réelle, car l'ironie met une distance entre le public et celui dont on se moque. Être écarté du groupe signifie vivre une mort lente et plus atroce que la mort instantanée qui abrège les souffrances. Grâce à ce procédé, Simon se voit réellement exclu, non seulement par Pierre mais aussi par toute la communauté.

Simon condamné par une formule magique, ne tombe pas et ne meurt pas. Par le procédé de l'ironie, Pierre dénonce la prétendue efficacité des paroles de condamnation des magiciens à l'exemple de Lucien contre Alexandre d'Abonotique⁶⁰. Luc réussit le tour de force de condamner Simon et toute la magie.

L'ironie souligne que Pierre connaît le monde des magiciens en employant leur langage. Il s'en sert contre eux. Donc, il se révèle plus compétent et performant. Selon Reimer, la force de l'intermédiaire ne se trouve pas uniquement dans le pouvoir de faire des miracles mais aussi de donner des malédictions⁶¹. La malédiction de Pierre n'est pas de type magique, mais éthique. Elle produit l'exclusion de Simon de la communauté comme le stipule explicitement la deuxième formulation de Pierre: "il n'y a pour toi ni part ni héritage dans ce qui se passe ici" (v. 21).

⁵⁸ B. MALINA – J.H. NEYREY, "Honor and Shame in Luke-Acts: Pivotal Values of the Mediterranean World", *The Social World of Luke-Acts. Models for Interpretation* (ed. J.H. NEYREY) (Peabody, MA 1991) 25-66.

⁵⁹ MALINA – NEYREY, "Honor and Shame", 40.

⁶⁰ LUCIEN DE SAMOSATE, *Alexandre ou le faux prophète* 17. Le public d'Alexandre en Paphlagonie et le Pont sont accusés "d'esprit épais et ignorants".

⁶¹ A.R. REIMER, *Miracle and Magic. A Study in the Acts of the Apostles and the Life of Apollonius of Tyana* (JSNTSS 235; London 2002) 107-111. L'auteur souligne que les "punitives miracles" font aussi partie de la puissance de l'intermédiaire légitime. Pierre est supérieur à Simon.

2. L'exclusion de Simon

Luc s'inscrit parfaitement dans la mouvance de son temps par sa prise de position contre Simon. Les termes de condamnation, "destruction", "exclusion", correspondent au sort réservé aux magiciens et "méchanceté", "iniquité" qualifient leur nature. Luc adopte une stratégie de communication basée sur la rhétorique⁶² pour montrer l'exclusion de Simon. On peut penser qu'ici Luc construit son récit en se basant sur la logique formelle d'Aristote en faisant appel au principe de contradiction⁶³ selon lequel "le contraire du vrai est faux"⁶⁴. Ce principe sera mis en œuvre dans son récit sous forme d'un raisonnement qui rappelle le syllogisme.

Les séquences des vv. 4-8 et 9-11 se développent sur le mode narratif et non sur le mode d'un raisonnement déductif. Prise séparément, chaque unité est indépendante, mais quand elles sont alignées, s'opère un véritable raisonnement à la manière d'un syllogisme. Les vv. 4-8 se présentent comme une première proposition ou prémisse qui s'oppose à celle de Simon (vv. 9-11). Tous les missionnaires annoncent le Christ (v. 5), c'est-à-dire un autre qui est au-dessus d'eux. Or, Simon le magicien s'annonce lui-même (v. 9-11). Donc il n'est pas un authentique missionnaire. Il est nécessairement exclu puisqu'il n'entre pas dans la catégorie énoncée par la majeure (vv. 12-13). À la fin de l'épisode, la victoire du missionnaire est totale. On y arrive non par une argumentation au premier degré, mais par une juxtaposition de deux séquences narratives qui s'opposent et aboutissent à une conclusion logique. Nous pouvons donc admirer la finesse de Luc et comprendre la raison de l'analepse. Grâce à l'analepse qui renverse l'ordre chronologique du récit, Luc incorpore Philippe dans la prémisse majeure d'où découle la mineure qui décline Simon et l'élimine.

Le même schéma syllogistique se répète aux vv. 14-24. Tous les missionnaires reconnaissent que l'Esprit se manifeste comme un don gratuit (vv. 14-17); or, Simon veut se l'approprier en offrant de l'argent (vv. 18-19). Donc, il n'est pas un authentique missionnaire.

⁶² M. BARATIN, "Quintilien", *Dictionnaire de l'Antiquité* (ed. J. LECLANT) (Paris 2005) 1860.

⁶³ "Il est impossible que le même attribut appartienne et n'appartienne pas en même temps au même sujet et sous le même rapport" (ARISTOTE *Métaphysique* III, 1005b, 9).

⁶⁴ A. LALANDE, *Vocabulaire technique et critique de la philosophie* (Paris 1985) 457.

Une fois de plus, il est dans l'erreur et doit être exclu (vv. 20-23). La construction logique est imparable. Dans le premier conflit, Simon subit une défaite et dans le deuxième, il est condamné. Avec Pierre, le raisonnement déductif est exprimé par deux conjonctions causales ὅτι (vv. 20.23) et γάρ (v. 21). On passe de l'implicite (vv. 4-13) à l'explicite (vv. 14-24), d'une capitulation à une condamnation. Luc montre et explique en blâmant (vv. 14-24). Le récit progresse en *crescendo*.

Un discours qui blâme se rattache au genre épидictique. Lors de la condamnation de Simon, les accusations pleuvent. C'est ce qu'Aristote appelle l'amplification "la forme la mieux appropriée au genre épидictique" (*Rhet.* I, 1368a, 9,26). L'amplification consiste à blâmer la personne pour ses actes et elle stigmatise "les vices", κακίαι (*Rhet.* I, 1366b, 9,22 et Ac 8,22). Luc ne s'en prive pas, car on trouve deux condamnations et six motifs d'accusation. Il reste tout à fait dans l'art rhétorique aristotélicien qui consiste à blâmer le coupable en multipliant les méfaits.

A l'opposé du blâme se tient le panégyrique. Paradoxalement, il n'y a aucun panégyrique des missionnaires. La narration se contente de raconter ce qu'ils font. Philippe travaille pour le Christ gratuitement en vue de gagner les Samaritains et ne cherche aucun avantage, de même les apôtres reconnaissent que leur pouvoir provient d'ailleurs, puis s'en vont aussitôt après avoir rempli leur mission. L'absence d'éloge des missionnaires "met en lumière la grandeur d'une vertu" (*Rhet.* I, 1367b, 9,26) qui consiste à ne pas chercher sa propre gloire. Pour eux, c'est la croissance de la Parole qui compte, but ultime de leur action. Luc blâme le faux et s'abstient de faire l'éloge du vrai qui s'impose de lui-même comme une évidence.

3. *L'offre du pardon de Pierre*

Comment alors interpréter le pardon qui est offert à Simon? N'est-ce pas *jarring* "discordant" comme l'affirme Garrett⁶⁵? À l'époque de Luc, l'accusation de magie sert à diffamer celui qui n'entre pas dans le système de l'accusateur⁶⁶. En offrant le pardon à un magicien condamné, le narrateur prend le contre-pied de la

⁶⁵ GARRETT, *The Demise of the Devil*, 72.

⁶⁶ HEINTZ, *Simon "le magicien"*, 32-36.

pratique habituelle qui consiste à vouloir éliminer le magicien, quand il a été considéré comme un danger public.

Luc condamne la magie et en même temps présente le magicien comme amendable. Sa narration instaure une autre manière de concevoir le monde. A tout péché, le pardon est offert. Luc ne fait que placer dans la bouche de Pierre les paroles de Jésus sur la croix, quand il pardonne à ses ennemis, comme Étienne à ses persécuteurs (7,60). Quand la mission quitte Jérusalem, le narrateur actualise les valeurs de l'Évangile qui prennent à contre-pied celles de son temps. La mission de Philippe puis des apôtres s'enracine dans la geste d'Étienne et de Jésus. "L'interprétation change la forme et le contenu (...) d'une culture dans laquelle elle a été produite et reçue"⁶⁷. Le mot et le geste transmettent une nouvelle valeur, une nouvelle vision du monde.

L'explicitation du pardon au v. 22 oblige à revenir en arrière pour réévaluer le v. 13 qui évoque aussi le thème de la conversion. Se convertir μετανοέω (v. 22) est synonyme de πιστεύω "croire" (vv. 12.13), car les deux mènent au βαπτίζω "baptiser" (vv. 12.13), mais aussi à ἀφίημι "pardonne les péchés" (v. 22), non explicité aux vv. 12-13. Quand les Juifs demandent ce qu'il faut faire après avoir écouté le discours de la Pentecôte (2,37), Pierre leur dit au v. 38 de se repentir μετανοέω afin que "chacun d'entre vous soit baptisé (βαπτισθήτω) dans le Christ et reçoive le pardon des péchés" (εἰς ἄφεσιν τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ὑμῶν). Le verbe μετανοέω "se convertir" (v. 22) est une reprise de la thématique du πιστεύω des vv. 12-13. Après la première activité de Simon, la conversion lui a déjà été offerte et il a été baptisé. Après sa rechute, une deuxième offre lui est adressée. On peut remarquer que Luc est constant dans son approche. L'offre de pardon a été réelle au v. 13, même si elle est passée sous silence et sera explicitée au v. 22. Cette offre de pardon n'est pas en contradiction avec la manière dont nous avons envisagé la destruction de Simon. Son exclusion de la communauté et de la Parole demeure effective tant que Simon reste enfermé dans sa vision magique. L'emploi de l'optatif traduit la chance qui est offerte à Simon s'il change de cœur. Alors il pourra être réintégré dans la communauté. C'est pourquoi, l'offre

⁶⁷ S. MAILLOUX, "Articulation and Understanding: The Pragmatic Intimacy between Rhetoric and Hermeneutics", *Rhetoric and Hermeneutics in our Time. A Reader* (eds. W. JOST – M.J. HYDE) (New Haven, CT 1997) 388.

de pardon s'accompagne d'un conditionnel. Il n'est pas dit qu'il sera pardonné *εἰ ἀφεθήσεται σοι*. Tout dépend du "penchant de son cœur" *ἡ ἐπίνοια τῆς καρδίας σου*. Rien n'est automatique, on n'est pas dans le domaine de la magie, mais d'un engagement de la personne. À chaque étape de la narration, Luc appelle à l'engagement personnel et dénonce la magie.

4. *Simon s'est-il converti? (v. 24)*

On peut toujours se demander si la supplique de Simon à Pierre de prier pour lui afin que rien ne lui arrive est l'expression de sa conversion. Le v. 24 reste énigmatique. Comme toujours, la narration lucanienne dit sans dire. Pour certains, Simon s'est converti et pour d'autres, Simon est resté sur sa position.

a) Simon s'est converti

Les plus explicites sur la conversion de Simon sont Lake et Cadbury⁶⁸. Pour ces exégètes, on ne peut lire ce texte en appliquant la doctrine des premiers siècles où aucune repentance n'était valide après le baptême. Ce passage serait encore dominé par la croyance juive de l'efficacité de la repentance comme on la trouve dans Ez 18,27, "quand le méchant se détourne de la méchanceté qu'il avait commise et qu'il accomplit droit et justice, il obtiendra la vie." Donc, pour eux, il ne fait pas de doute que Simon s'est converti "*notable convert*".

Cependant, nous pouvons constater qu'il y a conversion si quelqu'un reconnaît son péché et revient à Dieu (3,19); or, tel n'est pas le cas pour Simon. Sa demande de prière ne porte pas sur un changement de cœur. Il demande que la condamnation lui soit épargnée. "Priez pour moi (...) afin que rien (...) ne m'arrive" (v. 24).

b) Simon ne s'est pas converti

C'est pourquoi des auteurs ont pu affirmer pour des raisons différentes que Simon ne s'est pas converti. Selon Garrett⁶⁹, le magi-

⁶⁸ K. LAKE – H.J. CADBURY, *The Beginnings of Christianity* (London, 1933) IV, 94; H.J. KLAUCK, *Magic and Paganism in Early Christianity*. The World of the Acts of the Apostles (Minneapolis, MN 2000) 22.

⁶⁹ GARRETT, *The Demise of the Devil*, 72-74.

cien est un “criminel démasqué”; pour Witherington⁷⁰, la réaction de Simon n’est pas tournée vers la repentance; pour Spencer⁷¹, Simon est un apostat, sur qui tombera le couperet tôt ou tard. Chez d’autres exégètes, on trouve une position plus nuancée. Selon Barrett⁷², la repentance de Simon peut être envisagée, mais reste incertaine; pour sa part, Marguerat⁷³ montre deux aspects de la parole de Simon: d’une part, sa parole pourrait passer pour une allégeance à l’autorité apostolique, suggérant une éventuelle conversion et d’autre part, sa réaction peut être comprise comme “une subtile tentative de manœuvrer un plus fort que soi en vue d’obtenir le pardon”.

5. Une approche tragi-comique de Simon

Afin de faire ressortir la teneur du v. 24, il me faut revenir au traitement global de Simon en 8,4-25. Nous avons déjà vu comment l’ironie conduit à ridiculiser le magicien par le rire et à le démasquer en le faisant tomber toujours un peu plus bas. Après son premier effet de manche aux vv. 9-11, Simon passe de la magie à la foi sans qu’aucune critique ne soit formulée à son égard. Aux vv. 18-19, il récidive. A ce moment-là, il est démasqué et jugé par Pierre (vv. 20-23). Sa réputation est entamée un peu plus. Mais Simon plie et ne rompt pas. Au v. 24, il revient à la charge. C’est pourquoi, après le procédé de la parodie où Pierre adopte la posture du magicien pour confondre le magicien et le procédé du syllogisme développé en un récit, je fais maintenant appel au procédé du dégonflement de Simon⁷⁴ qui rappelle le personnage du fanfaron tel qu’il a été développé par Plaute⁷⁵.

⁷⁰ B. WITHERINGTON III, *The Acts of the Apostles*. A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI 1998) 288-289.

⁷¹ F.S. SPENCER, *The Portrait of Philip in Acts*. A Study of Roles and Relations (JSNTSS 67; Sheffield 1992) 125.

⁷² BARRETT, “Light on the Holy Spirit”, 294.

⁷³ MARGUERAT, *La première histoire du christianisme*, 205.

⁷⁴ On peut aussi voir le même procédé du dégonflement de Simon dans les *Actes de Pierre* 32 et *Les Homélies* 2,26-27 où Simon est ridiculisé et prend peur pour sa vie.

⁷⁵ Entre le 3^{ème} et le 2^{ème} siècle avant notre ère, Plaute, le poète comique latin, crée le personnage du fanfaron dégonflé qui connaîtra une grande postérité, surtout à partir de la Renaissance grâce à la *Commedia dell’Arte*. Il sera immortalisé au 17^{ème} siècle sous le nom de matamore qui signifie “tueur de

Comme toujours, une analogie offre des similitudes et des différences. Deux différences subsistent. Le personnage de Plaute dans le soldat fanfaron est le seul convaincu de ses rodomontades alors que personne dans son entourage, y compris son parasite Artotrogus, n'en est dupe. En revanche, les Samaritains, probablement "d'un esprit épais et ignorant"⁷⁶, pour reprendre une expression de Lucien, se sont laissé bernier par Simon le magicien. Ils adhèrent à son discours emphatique et ses activités d'éclat. La seconde différence se situe au niveau du registre du personnage. Pyrgopolinice tient le rôle du militaire et de l'amoureux, alors que Simon se situe dans le domaine spirituel, il est un magicien. Cependant le rapprochement est pertinent, car le matamore comme le magicien offre une trajectoire commune. Les deux cherchent la grandeur. On passe du gonflement au dégonflement graduel, au fur et à mesure que les deux sont mis en face de leur vérité. Ainsi, un même procédé narratif commande le traitement du personnage.

a) La dernière parole de Simon (v. 24)

Simon se trouve en difficulté puisque la destruction pèse sur lui, "périsse ton argent et toi" (v. 20). Ses jours sont comptés. Sa seule chance de survie est de se repentir comme Pierre le lui propose. Il risque une première parole "priez pour moi le Seigneur" δεήθητε ὑμεῖς ὑπὲρ ἐμοῦ πρὸς τὸν κύριον (v. 24).

Dans le contexte du fanfaron, le v. 24 apporte une nouvelle humiliation au magicien après l'anathème lancé par Pierre aux vv. 20-21. En demandant que le châtiment lui soit épargné, il reconnaît implicitement sa culpabilité. F. Heintz affirme que les premières fonctions du v. 24 "servent à vérifier sa culpabilité et à parachever sa caricature en tant que charlatan"⁷⁷. Comme Pyrgopolinice qui, pour sauver sa peau, reconnaît le bien-fondé des coups

Maures" en espagnol. La comédie de Plaute s'intitule *Miles gloriosus*, "Le soldat fanfaron". La première ébauche de ce personnage se trouve dans les *Acharniens* d'Aristophane où le soldat fanfaron est montré comme "lâche, cupide, imbu de lui-même, fanfaron, malhonnête et arriviste: une baudruche que Dicéopolis, [le personnage principal], n'aura pas de mal à dégonfler": P. THIERCY, "Notice sur les *Acharniens*", *Théâtre complet d'Aristophane* (La Pléiade; Paris 1997) 984.

⁷⁶ LUCIEN DE SAMOSATE, *Alexander or the False Prophet*, 17.

⁷⁷ HEINTZ, *Simon "le magicien"*, 142.

qu'il a reçus, de même Simon avoue indirectement sa faute en demandant de prier pour lui. "Priez pour moi" reflète la situation du poltron qui remet sa vie entre les mains d'un sauveur. Il se montre ridicule parce que celui qui se déclarait le sauveur des Samaritains, se trouve maintenant dans la position de celui qui doit être sauvé.

b) L'appel à Pierre

Le ridicule de Simon se décuple, car les Samaritains ayant embrassé la foi, il n'y a plus personne qui l'écoute. Il appréhende toujours le signe comme une puissance détenue selon une échelle hiérarchique. Pour lui, seul un plus fort peut le libérer d'une malédiction. Il croit se tirer d'affaire en faisant appel à Pierre, mais il s'enlise davantage, car aux yeux du public, Simon est toujours resté dans sa vision magique. En fait, sa demande établit qu'il considère Pierre comme un magicien plus puissant. Sa prière n'est pas une adresse à Dieu, mais à des hommes. Son ignorance paraît ridicule aux yeux du lecteur. On retrouve chez Simon la fixité du personnage comique traditionnel qui ne change jamais de comportement. Comme le souligne Stählin⁷⁸, il demeure dans le monde magique. Son stratagème pour se tirer d'affaire se retourne contre lui. Il est dépouillé non seulement de pouvoir mais aussi de parole. Sa réputation et son honneur sont anéantis.

c) La teneur de la demande: εἰρήκατε "vous aviez dit"

Toutes les initiatives de Simon jouent contre lui et renforcent son ridicule. Comme nous l'avons vu, Simon prend peur pour sa vie en demandant "que rien de ce qui est prédit ne lui arrive" (v. 24b). Cette constatation se confirme par le registre de langage. Au v. 24b, il exprime sa demande en employant le parfait εἰρήκατε. L'emploi rare⁷⁹ de la forme archaïque du parfait εἰρήκατε "vous aviez dit" est très significatif⁸⁰. Haar, qui pense que Simon se serait converti, voit dans ce verbe le signal d'un modèle d'autorité pour le pardon des péchés dans une communauté qui était familière des pratiques

⁷⁸ G. STÄHLIN, *Die Apostelgeschichte* (NTD 5; Göttingen 1962) 125.

⁷⁹ A part 8,24, on retrouve dans les Actes, cette forme verbale en 13,34 et 17,28.

⁸⁰ HAAR, *Simon Magus*, 191.

magiques⁸¹. Mais sur le background de la figure du matamore, l'expressivité du verbe sonne comme le langage obséquieux de celui, qui pour se tirer d'affaire, exagère les marques de servilité. Il emploie une formule ampoulée en espérant faire de l'effet sur son auditoire et sur Pierre pour les convaincre de sa bonne foi. Cette analyse s'applique également au pronom sujet ὑμεῖς accompagnant l'impératif δεήθητε au v. 24a. C'est la seule fois qu'un pronom sujet est employé dans la péricope. Son emploi est synonyme d'emphase⁸² qui traduit de nouveau l'attitude servile et obséquieuse du fanfaron. L'emploi de la deuxième personne du pluriel par Simon pour s'adresser à Pierre souligne la supériorité de Pierre sur Simon. Alors, le v. 24 remplit une autre fonction qui "confirme l'exclusivité du pouvoir des apôtres⁸³", supérieur à celui de Simon. Celui-ci se voit enlever les Samaritains, la foi, sa place dans la communauté, son honneur, sa parole et sa réputation. Il reste isolé.

L'analogie entre la figure du matamore et du magicien conduit à interpréter le v. 24 comme le coup final porté contre Simon. Après ce travail sur le traitement ironique de Simon et de son dégonflement à la manière du personnage du matamore, on peut se demander comment comprendre la clôture ouverte du v. 25.

6. La clôture ouverte (v. 25)

Le départ des apôtres n'apporte pas de réponse à la demande de Simon de prier pour lui. Celle-ci reste suspendue dans le vide. Οἱ μὲν οὖν "alors eux" qui indique la progression de la mission, est un connecteur⁸⁴ entre la mission des dispersés et celle des apôtres, mais il n'établit pas de lien avec Simon. Comment interpréter ce silence entre la parole de Simon et le départ des apôtres? Beaucoup ont vu là une mise en garde adressée à la communauté et à ses responsables contre toute tentative de contrôler l'Esprit⁸⁵. Selon Klauck⁸⁶,

⁸¹ HAAR, *Simon Magus*, 191.

⁸² BLASS – DEBRUNNER § 277,1-2; il en est de même pour BARRETT, *Acts* I, 417.

⁸³ HEINTZ, *Simon "le magicien"*, 142.

⁸⁴ CONZELMANN, *Acts*, 66. L'auteur parle d'un *literary connective* mais la chaîne est rompue.

⁸⁵ A. WEISER, *Die Apostelgeschichte* (ÖTK 5,1; Gütersloh, Würzburg 1981) 206.

⁸⁶ KLAUCK, *Magic and Paganism*, 23.

la clôture ouverte semble pointer vers le futur de Simon qui refléterait une communauté lucanienne, d'origine païenne aux prises avec la magie ou encore une communauté dont les membres appartiendraient à une secte simonienne à qui Luc ferait alors une offre pour qu'ils réintègrent l'Église⁸⁷. Bauernfeind estime que Luc ne pouvait présenter jusqu'au bout un Simon condamné parce que les lecteurs de l'époque devaient savoir que Simon était toujours en activité et n'avait pas été battu par Pierre⁸⁸. F. Heintz considère comme une aberration que les commentateurs se demandent "ce qu'il va devenir de Simon". "Il va de soi, pourtant, que ces questions sont loin de préoccuper l'auteur des Actes⁸⁹". Est-ce vrai?

Le v. 25 apparaît comme le dernier camouflet de la narration lucanienne envers le fanfaron. Lui, envers qui les interlocuteurs ont toujours réagi: les Samaritains aux vv. 9-11, Philippe au v. 13, les apôtres aux vv. 20-23, se voit privé de réaction au v. 25. Simon reste seul, face à lui-même, attestant qu'il n'était que prétentieux et "sans envergure"⁹⁰. La fin est toujours le moment de prise de conscience de ce qui s'est passé. Le blanc du texte laisse penser qu'il est devant un choix: va-t-il se repentir ou revenir à ses anciennes habitudes? À cette question, personne ne peut répondre, même pas Luc, car la conversion ne relève pas de la magie, mais de l'engagement d'une personne dans la liberté. Le retour de Simon à la communauté appartient à Simon lui-même. Il est en présence de données claires. D'un côté, une vision magique du religieux et de l'autre côté, la vision de la foi. La question de la conversion de Simon ne passe pas vraiment au second plan. Elle reste ouverte comme une interrogation au cœur du texte. Qu'est devenu Simon? Personne ne le sait. Selon Justin⁹¹, il est probable que Simon ait recruté de nouveaux adeptes en Samarie, car sa réputation a été telle qu'elle a gagné le deuxième siècle et au-delà. De telles hypothèses sont plausibles, mais restent en dehors de mon investigation.

⁸⁷ G. KLEIN, "Der Synkretismus als theologisches Problem in der ältesten christlichen Apologetik", *ZTK* 64 (1967) 76.

⁸⁸ O. BAUERNFEIND, *Kommentar und Studien zur Apostelgeschichte* (WUNT 22; Tübingen 1980) 123.

⁸⁹ HEINTZ, *Simon "le magicien"*, 142.

⁹⁰ HEINTZ, *Simon "le magicien"*, 138.

⁹¹ JUSTIN, *Apologie* 26,1.

L'analyse littéraire enracinée dans l'histoire met en évidence de manière saisissante la complexité du personnage de Simon et l'ambiguïté de la magie. Le magicien a la peau dure et n'abandonne pas le terrain au premier coup de semonce. Cependant, Luc règle le cas-Simon en s'inspirant de la littérature de son époque montrant ainsi une grande familiarité avec le monde de son temps. Il ruine la réputation du magicien et l'expose à l'opprobre de son public et du lectorat. Simon le fanfaron est rempli de lui-même et ne sera jamais suivi par un public averti. Ainsi, le récit de Simon peut servir de paradigme pour comprendre le fonctionnement d'un magicien et l'impact de la magie dans l'univers de la foi. À travers la dénonciation de Simon, Luc offre à son lectorat d'hier et d'aujourd'hui des repères pour discerner entre le vrai et le faux religieux. La question reste toujours d'actualité.

Séminaire inter-îles
5, rue Balfour,
Beau-Bassin, Ile Maurice

Patrick FABIEN

SUMMARY

The episode of Simon the magician is found in a transitional section and inaugurates a series of conversions between chapters 8 and 11. When the missionaries leave Jerusalem, they encounter new obstacles. This article focuses on Simon's conversion: is he truly converted? As magic is very powerful and can clothe any religious system reducing it to its own vision, based on the magician's power, the reader wonders till the end of the story. On the one hand, Philip and Simon as well as Peter and Simon are depicted in a mimetic parallelism; on the other hand, Peter denounces the magician and condemns him by ruining his reputation. At the end of the story, Simon is a deflated *matamore* left alone with himself. Will he change his magic vision and behaviour? No one knows but himself.

Psalms 120–136: Songs for a Great Festival

Psalms 120–134 are a functional unity, to which Psalms 135 and 136 are closely connected. This article is intended to analyse the relationship between the texts and to elucidate their nature and background.

1. *Psalms 120–134*

The title שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת of Psalms 120–134¹ gives the impression that in a sense these texts are special in the Book of Psalms. There are several data confirming this.

In their phraseology Psalms 120–134 are somewhat uncommon². Among these texts Psalm 132 appears to be the most traditional one, as five of its terms at least are characteristic psalm words: מִשְׁכָּנֹת, “dwelling place” (of YHWH: vv. 5, 7); חֲסִיד, “faithful” (vv. 9, 16); בֵּרַךְ pi., “bless” (v. 15); יִשְׁע, “salvation” (v. 16); and רִנֵּן pi. as “shout for joy” (vv. 9, 16). Psalm 130 has four elements typical of psalm language: קָרָא, “cry”, as connected with שָׁמַע, “hear, listen” (vv. 1-2); תַּחֲנוּנִים, “supplications” (v. 2); יָהּ (v. 3); and יָחַל pi., “hope” (v. 7). In Psalm 125 there are at least two of them: the verb מוֹט ni., “be moved” (v. 1); and עוֹלָתָה, “injustice”, with the archaic ending הִתָּה (v. 3); to these might be added the phrases יִשְׂרָיִם בְּלִבּוֹתָם, “those who are upright in their hearts” (v. 4), and פְּעֻלֵּי הָאֵן, “those causing mischief” (v. 5), although their form is not the usual one. The opening line of the collection, too, has typical psalm phraseology, as it testifies the speaker’s “distress” (צָרָתָהּ), his “crying” (קָרָא), and YHWH’s “answering” (עֲנָה). The continuation of Psalm 120, however, is idiomatically different. Of the fourteen texts that will follow, two

¹ In Ps 121,1 שִׁיר לַמַּעֲלוֹת.

² For the criteria see M. TSEVAT, *A Study of the Language of the Biblical Psalms* (Philadelphia, PE 1955), esp. 7-9. In the present article, as a departure from Tsevat, late usage is left out of consideration.

have no words or forms representative of psalm language³, while nine of them have two such elements at most⁴.

By their style and their poetic form, too, the texts differ from traditional psalms in several respects⁵. Poetic parallelism is relatively rare in them. The verse rhythm of 3+3 accents is not nearly as common as it is elsewhere in the psalms, while the so-called Qina metre is well represented⁶. Several words and forms are not in accordance with usual literary idiom; they may reflect colloquial language⁷. Word repetition is uncommonly frequent, especially as applied in anadiplosis⁸ and anaphora⁹. The use of the tenses is noteworthy as well. In the psalms the tenses are generally used, to a great extent, in an archaic, non-temporal manner¹⁰. In Psalms 120-134 the usage largely agrees with that of prose texts.

A datum relating to the foregoing is the absence of traditional textual types. Songs of Prayer, individual and collective, Hymns, and Songs of Thanksgivings are the most characteristic psalm texts. Among Psalms 120-134 these types are missing¹¹. Elements

³ Thus Pss 129 and 133.

⁴ Thus in Ps 121 מוט, "be moved, slip" (v. 3); in Ps 122 יח (v. 4); in Ps 123 חנן, "show favour, have mercy" (vv. 2, 3); in Ps 124 עבר as "go over, overpower" (vv. 4, 5); in Ps 126 רנה as "jubilation" (vv. 2, 5, 6); in Ps 127 אשרי, "happy who ..." (v. 5); in Ps 128 אשרי (vv. 1, 2) and בריך pi., "bless" (v. 5); in Ps 131 הלך pi., "go" (v. 1), and יחל pi., "hope" (v. 3); in Ps 134 בריך pi. (vv. 1, 2, 3).

⁵ For an elaborate survey of the use of words, syntactical forms, phrasings, modes of expression and figures of speech in Pss 120-134 see H. VIVIERS, "The Coherence of the *ma'alot* Psalms", *ZAW* 106 (1994) 275-289, esp. 278-283.

⁶ See especially Pss 122; 126; 128; 129.

⁷ This applies to the circumscription of genitival relationship in Ps 123,4b; the construction לולי...ש ("if not... that") in Ps 124,1.2; the element למען לא ("so that not", instead of פן, "lest") in Ps 125,3; the plural ידיהם ("their hands", not ידם, "their hand") with שלח ("stretch out") in Ps 125,3; the construction ישרים בלבוהם ("those upright in their hearts", instead of ישרי-לב, "the upright of heart") in Ps 125,4; the form פעלי האון (instead of אין פעלי, "those working mischief") in Ps 125,5; the word נב for "back" in Ps 129,3.

⁸ Ps 120,6-7; 121,1-2.3-4.4-5; 122,2-3.4a.5; 123,2-3.3-4; 124,4-5.

⁹ Ps 121,3.5.7-8; 122,5.8-9; 123,2; 124,3-5; 126,2-3; 127,1-2; 128,5-6; 131,2.

¹⁰ See Th. BOOIJ, "Psalm cxxxix: Text, Syntax, Meaning", *VT* 55 (2005) 1-2.

¹¹ Cf. M. MANNATI, "Les Psaumes Gradués constituent-ils un genre littéraire distinct à l'intérieur du psautier biblique?", *Sem* 29 (1979) 86-87.

or features of them may be found. Ps 120,1 and Ps 129,1-4 recall the Individual Songs of Thanksgiving; Ps 126,4 would fit into a Collective Song of Prayer; Psalm 130 resembles, in some degree, an Individual Song of Prayer. But none of the traditional types is there in authentic or complete representation. Also, apart from Psalm 132, the texts are much shorter than psalms on average. Numerically they are a tenth part of the Psalter, in total length less than a twentieth.

So far, formal aspects of the texts have been considered. Two features seem to be typical of their content. First, there is a notable preference for scenes from daily life: slaves watching their master's gesture (Ps 123); people sowing and reaping (Ps 126); men discussing at the city gate (Ps 127); children sitting around the table (Ps 128); an infant at rest with its mother (Ps 131). Secondly, some terms, relevant to the community and its well-being, are found in remarkable frequency: "Israel" nine times (and that in eight psalms), "Zion" seven times (seven psalms), "Jerusalem" five times (three psalms), "bless" / "blessing" (ברך pi., pu. / ברכה) nine times (five psalms), "peace" (שלום) seven times (four psalms)¹².

2. *Songs of Ascents*

Obviously, given the special character of Psalms 120-134, it is important to understand the term heading them, שיר המעלות (once שיר למעלות)¹³. The following interpretations may rank as the most important¹⁴.

¹² In the Book of Psalms as a whole (about 23 times the size of Pss 120-134) "Israel" is found 62 times (38 psalms), "Zion" 38 times (31 psalms), "Jerusalem" 17 times (11 psalms), ברך pi., pu. / ברכה 63 times (38 psalms), שלום 27 times (19 psalms).

¹³ Because שיר המעלות can be taken as "Songs of the מעלות" (see Ps 137,3; also Mishnah Sukkah 5,4), the title may originally have related to the collection as a whole. Later on then, when the collection was incorporated in the psalter, the title was added to the separate psalms. Cf. W. GESENIUS – E. KAUTZSCH, *Hebräische Grammatik* (Leipzig 281909) § 124r, 127e.

¹⁴ For more data see L.D. CROW, *The Songs of Ascents (Psalms 120-134). Their Place in Israelite History and Religion* (Atlanta, GA 1996) 3-25; M.D. GOULDER, *The Psalms of the Return (Book V, Psalms 107-150)* (JSOTSS 258; Sheffield 1998) 20-24.

First, there are interpretations based on מעלה as “step”, in plural “steps” as leading up to, e.g., an altar (Ezek 43,17), a throne (1 Kgs 10,19), or a gate (Ezek 40,26)¹⁵. In both the Mishnah and the Tosephta tractate Sukkah tells about nocturnal festivities that took place in the temple court during Sukkoth, the Feast of Booths¹⁶. There were torch dances then, and the Levites used to play on all sorts of instruments of music and to sing, standing on the half-circular steps which lead down from the court of the men to that of the women. The number of these steps, fifteen, is said to have corresponded to the number of the מעלות songs¹⁷. Some take this to imply that these songs themselves are texts which the Levites used to sing on the steps (מעלות)¹⁸. However, the tractate does not say so, nor does it claim that the name שיר המעלות derives from the steps. In fact, because of their plaintive or pleading tone (Pss 120; 123; 130), or modest nature (Ps 131), some of the מעלות songs would be scarcely suitable for an exuberant celebration as took place, according to the rabbinical account, in the temple court. The local situation may also be taken into account. The common heading of the texts, considered in connection with their special nature, is likely to be of early date, if not original. The situation dealt with in Sukkah, however, is that of the Herodian temple. It is questionable whether the Jerusalem temple had the fifteen steps when the מעלות songs were given their name. It is not even certain that fifteen songs were counted at that time, as in the separate psalms the common title may be secondary and the present Psalm 127 seems to unite two different texts (vv. 1-2.3-5).

Wilhelm Gesenius takes מעלות as “steps” in a figurative sense. In his view, the title originates from a figure of speech

¹⁵ Cf. LXX: ᾠδὴ τῶν ἀναβαθμῶν, “song of the steps”; Jerome: *canticum graduum*; Targum: שירא דאחאמר על מסוקין דתהומא, “song that was said on the steps of the depth”.

¹⁶ Mishnah Sukkah 5,1-4; Tosephta Sukkah 4,1-9. See further H. BORNHÄUSER, *Sukka (Laubhüttenfest)* (Die Mischna II.6; Berlin 1935) 137-149.

¹⁷ Mishnah Sukkah 5,4; see also Middot 2,5.

¹⁸ Thus H. GRAETZ, “Die Halleluja- und Hallel-Psalmen”, *MGWJ* 28 (1879) 251; E. KÖNIG, *Die Psalmen*. Eingeleitet, übersetzt und erklärt (Gütersloh 1927) 18-19; H. HERKENNE, *Das Buch der Psalmen*. Übersetzt und erklärt (HS V/2; Bonn 1936) 14.

characteristic of the Songs, the so-called staircase-like progression of thought¹⁹. This explanation is not very plausible. There is no indication that Israelites felt the thought progression to be “staircase-like”. More importantly, the figure is not found in all the Songs. Whereas it is conspicuous in the first part of the collection, elsewhere it is found in a rudimentary state²⁰, or not at all.

In addition to “step”, מַעֲלָה can mean “ascent”. Generally, as related to Psalms 120–134, it is taken in that meaning²¹, which admits of different interpretations as well.

Ezra 7,9 mentions a מַעֲלָה, “ascent”, from Babylon to Jerusalem. From ancient times, on account of this use of מַעֲלָה, there has been the view that Psalms 120–134 are songs of those who from exile “ascended” (עָלָה) to their homeland²². However, some of the texts convey the impression that their speakers or addressees are living in their own country (see Pss 125–128).

People not only “ascended” to the land of Israel, but also to Jerusalem (1 Kgs 12,27–28; Zech 14,16–19; Ps 122,4) and to the sanctuary (thus e.g. 2 Kgs 20,5.8; 23,2; Jer 26,10; Ps 24,3; 2 Chr 29,20). Although the noun מַעֲלָה is not found as “ascent” in precisely that sense, it is a reasonable assumption that it could be used so. The title in Psalms 120–134 is a designation then of pilgrimage songs or procession songs. The interpretation of שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלָה as “pilgrimage song” is common²³, but hardly plausible.

¹⁹ W. GESENIUS, *Thesaurus philologicus criticus linguae hebraeae et chaldaee Veteris Testamenti* II/2 (Lipsiae 1840) 1032. F. DELITZSCH, *Biblischer Commentar über die Psalmen* (Leipzig 1883) 780–781, supports this interpretation. See Ps 120,2–3.5–7; 121,1–2.3–5; 122,2–3.6–9; 123,1–4.

²⁰ See Ps 124,4–5; 126,2–3; 127,1–2; 128,4–5a.5b–6.

²¹ Thus already Theodotion, Ps. 120,1a: ᾠσμα τῶν ἀναβάσεων, “song of the ascents”; Aquila and Symmachus: εἰς τὰς ἀναβάσεις, “for the ascents”.

²² Thus representatives of the Antiochian school. Midrash Tehillim has a similar view (see CROW, *Songs*, 9–10). Cf. עָלָה in e.g. Gen 45,25; Ezra 1,3; 2,1.

²³ See the commentaries. K. SEYBOLD, *Die Wallfahrtpsalmen*. Studien zur Entstehungsgeschichte von Psalm 120–134 (Neukirchen-Vluyn 1978) 73, holds the collection to be a kind of vademecum for pilgrims, with prayers, songs, and texts for meditation. Similarly L.D. CROW, *Songs*, 157 (“a sort of devotional handbook for pilgrims”). H. SEIDEL, “Wallfahrtslieder”, *Das lebendige Wort*. Beiträge zur kirchlichen Verkündigung. Festgabe für Gottfried Voigt zum 65. Geburtstag (Hrsg. H. SEIDEL – K.H. BIERITZ) (Berlin 1982) 38, thinks that Pss 120–134, as a collection of meditative and edifying texts, may have been recited by the Levites on the journey to Jerusalem and the temple.

Psalm 122 is supposed to support it. That psalm, however, though clearly the song of a pilgrim, need not be a song used in pilgrimages. In fact, singing or meditating pilgrims do not figure in Old Testament texts. The remaining understanding is that of שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת as “procession song”²⁴. For the following reasons it is to be preferred indeed.

First, processions to the sanctuary, unlike pilgrimages, are known to have been accompanied by music and singing (see 2 Sam 6,1-5.12-17; Ps 42,5; 68,25-27; 100,4; Neh 12,31-43; 1 Chr 13,5-8; 15).

Secondly, the Songs of Ascents seem to suit the situation by their content. In these songs everyday reality meets with the atmosphere of the cult. Everyday reality is suggested in the images of daily life, the prose-like use of the tenses, the mostly unofficial language and forms — features serving, moreover, popular understanding and appreciation. The cultic atmosphere, on the other hand, is perceptible in words that sound like liturgical formulas. Psalm 134, closing the collection, ends in a benediction: “May YHWH bless you from Zion, he that made heaven and earth”. The first part of this benediction (occurring also in Ps 128,5) reminds one of the priestly blessing in Num 6,24-26 and v. 15a of the cultic Psalm 115; the second part (also in Ps 121,2; 124,8) is identical with v. 15b of the same psalm. Other such formulaic sayings are: “Our help is in the name of YHWH” (Ps 124,8); “Peace upon Israel” (Ps 125,5; 128,6); “O Israel, hope in YHWH!” (Ps 130,7; 131,3). The note of charitable authority, typical of these elements, can also be heard in the second person verses of Psalm 121, the reassuring conclusion of Psalm 126, and the formula “let Israel now say” in Ps 124,1 and 129,1²⁵; the sapiential Psalms 127 and 128 sound it in admonition, benediction and beatitudes. The linkage of daily forms and images to words of consecration and friendly authority suits a ritual that, essentially, is a passage from common reality to the dwelling place of God.

²⁴ Thus S. MOWINCKEL, *The Psalms in Israel's Worship* (Oxford 1962) II, 208; L.C. ALLEN, *Psalms 101-50, revised* (WBC 21; Nashville, TN 2002) 194.

²⁵ F. CRÜSEMANN, *Studien zur Formgeschichte von Hymnus und Danklied in Israel* (Neukirchen-Vluyn 1969) 166-167, rightly argues that the function of the formula in these psalms is to be distinguished from that at the beginning of Ps 118, where different groups are called on to a real “saying”.

Finally, on understanding “ascents” as processional ascents, the composition of the collection as a whole makes sense. To the faithful of YHWH, often exposed to hostility and deceit, God’s dwelling place was a place of brotherhood and blessing. Their journey to that place is reflected in the arrangement of the texts. Psalm 120 opens by mentioning YHWH’s help for the faithful calling on him in distress: an opening particularly meaningful to those who, because of special deliverance, intended to praise God “in the midst of the congregation”²⁶. The psalm goes on to picture the animosity experienced by the faithful in daily life, a misery complained of in so many Songs of Prayer²⁷. Psalm 121 then shows the faithfuls’ life as a journey made under YHWH’s protection²⁸. Together, Psalms 120 and 121 suit the first phase of the procession. The texts following them can hardly be linked to specific phases; they do fit in, however, with the ritual as a whole. Psalm 122, by celebrating Jerusalem, articulates the feelings of worshippers from outside. Psalms 123–129 deal with various aspects of Israel’s existence, in laments and prayers, expressions of confidence and gratitude, blessings and lessons of wisdom. When the procession draws near to Zion, there is a change of mood²⁹: a sense of guilt is sounded, expressions of humility and hope are being heard (Pss 130–131). Halting before the city gate, the singers recite the pre-exilic Psalm 132, an introit text reminding God of his commitment to David³⁰. Psalm 133 praises fraternal togetherness as a blessing

²⁶ See Ps 22,23–27; 40,10–11; 107; 116,14.18–19; 1 Sam 1,3–5.21.

²⁷ The names in v. 5 are used in a figurative sense, indicating aggressive people. See vv. 6–7, also e.g. Ps 27,3; 62,4, and cf. Gen 16,12; 25,13; Isa 21,17; Ezek 32,26.

²⁸ Although the idea of a journey underlies various expressions in this psalm, there is nothing to suggest that a pilgrimage is meant. For a human being’s way or journey as a metaphor of his life and undertakings see e.g. Pss 18,33; 139,3; 142,4; Prov 15,19; also e.g. 2 Sam 3,25. Verse 3a may be compared with Pss 66,9; 94,18.

²⁹ In a different form, this change may also be observed in Psalm 118. There in vv. 6–13 Israel’s affliction is presented as caused by human beings (cf. Ps 129), whereas according to v. 18 it is a chastisement dealt by YHWH.

³⁰ See Th. BOOIJ, “Psalm 132: Zion’s Well-Being”, *Bib* 90 (2009) 75–83. In Ps 132 YHWH’s “dwelling place” and “resting place” is not only the temple or the temple mount, but Zion as a city; see vv. 7–8, 13–15, 17. In Ps 118,19–20, similarly, the reference must be to one of the city gates: cf. Isa

granted in Zion³¹; it is likely to have been recited after entering the city. In Psalm 134, the use of הנה in v. 1 (“lo”, “come on”) suits a situation that calls for “blessing YHWH” (cf. הנה in Gen 19,2; Judg 20,7): the procession has entered the sanctuary now³².

3. *The Great Hallel*

In early rabbinical tradition a Great Hallel is known besides the Egyptian Hallel. In the Babylonian Talmud rabbi Tarphon takes the view that at the Passover meal, after completing the Egyptian Hallel over the fourth cup of wine, the Great Hallel is to be recited³³. The question is asked, מהיכן הלל הגדול, “From where the Great Hallel?” There are three answers. The first answer is, מהודו עד נהרות בבל, “From *O praise* until *the rivers of Babylon*”. The second is, משיר המעלות עד נהרות בבל, “From *A Song of Ascents* until *the rivers of Babylon*”. The third is, מכי יעקב בחר לו יה עד נהרות בבל, “From *for YHWH has chosen Jacob for himself* until *the rivers of Babylon*”. The third answer is unequivocal: Ps 135,4–136,26 must be meant. The first answer is generally assumed to refer to Psalm 136; this indeed is the text in the Passover Haggadah. The second answer, however, appears to be problematic. By שיר המעלות either the title of Psalm 134 is supposed to be intended, or that of Psalm 120. It is in favour of the former opinion that Psalm 134, as a call for “blessing” YHWH, is related to the calls for praise that will follow. In favour of the latter opinion it can be argued that, just as in the first answer הודו, “Praise!”, logically refers to the first occurrence of this call in Psalm 136, שיר המעלות in the second answer is likely to intend the first occurrence of that phrase in the collection. In my view, for understanding the Talmudic passage, it is important to include considerations regarding the content of the psalm texts in question. The reason why in the third answer the recitation of Psalm 135 starts with v. 4 must be that a text recited

26,2, and see D. HAMIDOVIĆ, “‘Les portes de justice’ et ‘la porte de YHWH’ dans la Psaume 118,19-20”, *Bib* 81 (2000) 542-550.

³¹ See Th. BOOIJ, “Psalm 133: ‘Behold, how good and how pleasant’”, *Bib* 83 (2002) 258-267.

³² The phrase יהוה עבדי refers to the members of the cultic community. Cf. e.g. Ps 34,23; 113,1; 135,1; Deut 32,36.43. See also Lev 9,5; Jer 7,10.

³³ Pesahim 118a.

at the Passover meal could hardly open with a call to worshippers “who stand in the house of YHWH” (v. 2) – especially so after the destruction of the second temple. For the same reason it is not probable that the Great Hallel should have opened with Ps 134,1. Therefore it may be assumed that the second answer refers to all the songs bearing the title שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת. References to Jerusalem, the temple and the gathering there would not be left out, but hardly interfered with the actual situation when they were heard in their literary context.

According to the second answer the Great Hallel unites Psalms 135 and 136 with at least one of the songs preceding them. If the above explanation is correct, the answer supposes it to include all the Songs of Ascents. I suspect that this in fact is the supposition in the other answers as well. The question מִהֵיכָן הַלֵּל הַגָּדוֹל, “From where the Great Hallel?”, is not then about the beginning of the Great Hallel itself, but about the point from where this text is to be recited at the Passover meal³⁴.

The assumption that Psalms 135 and 136 were connected once to Psalms 120–134³⁵ is supported by the texts themselves. The author of Psalm 135 (or its first part) apparently meant to link his text to the Songs of Ascents. As its opening he chose Ps 113,1, of which he transposed the stichs following הַלְלוּ יְהוָה, thus smoothing the transition to v. 2a, which (apart from שׁ) he derived from Psalm 134. In v. 3 he used the word pair טוֹב – נָעִים (“good – pleasant”), also found in Ps 133,1. Psalm 136, for its part, is strongly reminiscent of Psalm 135. Verse 1a (“... for he is good”) recalls Ps 135,3³⁶. Verses 2-3 have the words אֱלֹהִים and אֲדֹנָי in common with Ps 135,5, with which they agree by their content as well. In

³⁴ Cf. GRAETZ, “Psalmen”, 241-242. Graetz argues that the Great Hallel can hardly have consisted of one or two psalms, when the Festal (Egyptian) Hallel had six of them. Since “great” (גָּדוֹל) is often used in the sense of “important, prominent”, especially so in later Hebrew, the argument is not decisive.

³⁵ J.C. McCANN, “The Book of Psalms. Introduction, Commentary, and Reflections”, *The New Interpreter's Bible* (Nashville, TN 1994-2004) IV, 1219, 1223, considers Pss 135 and 136 to be “an appendix to the Songs of Ascents”.

³⁶ In Ps 135,3 יְהוָה seems to be a later addition, intended to make clear that the word טוֹב relates to God, not to the praise of God (as in Ps 92,2). In Ps 147,1, of which the first words were taken from Ps 135,3, the element יְהוָה is missing.

vv. 5-9 the praise of YHWH's acts in nature, as found in Ps 135,6-7, is replaced by an account of creation, in the main according to Gen 1,1.14-19. Verses 10-15, focussing on the exodus, replace the Egyptian episode in Ps 135,8-9. Verses 1-15 together are made up of five strophes of three lines each³⁷. The loss of this pattern after v. 15 appears to be occasioned by the insertion, in vv. 17-22, of an adapted version of Ps. 135,10-12. The conclusion has to be that Psalm 136 was largely based on its predecessor.

4. *Date of the texts*

The majority of the Songs of Ascents, as well as the Songs as a collection and Psalms 135 and 136, seem to stem from the somewhat later post-exilic period.

For the Songs as a collection and most of its texts this dating is first of all justified by linguistic facts. Forms and words in the Songs occurring elsewhere only or mainly in relatively late texts are: a finite form of הִיָּה ("to be") linked with a participle in Ps 122,2³⁸; לִ introducing a direct object in Ps 122,4b³⁹; גַּב as "back (of a human)" in Ps 129,3⁴⁰; סְלִיחָה ("forgiveness") in Ps 130,4⁴¹. Several elements show the northern Hebrew and Aramaic influence on post-exilic Judaeian Hebrew: thus שׁ (for אֶשׁ) in Ps 122,3.4; 123,2; 124,1.2.6; 129,6.7; 133,2.3⁴²; the construction שׁ ... לֹאִי ("if not ... that") in Ps 124,1.2⁴³; אֲנִי

³⁷ After three verses opening with הוֹדוּ ("praise...!"), each of vv. 4-6 begins with לִ plus participle ("who ..."); the latter form is repeated at the beginning of three thematic units, each made up of three verses (see vv. 7, 10, 13).

³⁸ See S.R. DRIVER, *A Treatise on the Use of the Tenses in Hebrew and Some Other Syntactical Questions* (Oxford 1892) § 135, 5.

³⁹ See GESENIUS – KAUTZSCH, § 117n; P. JOÜON – T. MURAOKA, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew* (Roma 1991) § 125k.

⁴⁰ Designating a bulge or elevation apparently, the word is used for "mound", "brow", "boss" (of a shield). In Ezek 10,12 it denotes a cherub's back. The usual word for "back" is גֻּב or גֻּבִּי.

⁴¹ It is found in Neh 9,17 and Dan 9,9.

⁴² See the dictionaries; also G.A. RENDBURG, *Linguistic Evidence for the Northern Origin of Selected Psalms* (Atlanta, GA 1990) 91-92.

⁴³ See Targum Ps 27,13 (אֲלֹאִי דִּי) and Ps.-Jonathan Deut 1,1 (אֲלֹאִי דִּי); cf. R. PAYNE SMITH, *Thesaurus Syriacus* (Oxonii 1879-1901) I, 198, s.v. 'ell l'. A Hebrew letter from Murabba'at, dated about 135 AD, has the construction אֲנִי ... שׁ אֲלִי (DJD II, 1961, 156, text 42:5).

(“then”) in Ps 124,3-5⁴⁴; קדמה instead of טרם (“before”) in Ps 129,6⁴⁵. In Ps 123,1 הישבי (“who is sitting”), with the article and *hireq compaginis*, as *forma mixta*, is a late archaism⁴⁶. The forms indicating genitival relationship in Ps 123,4b are not in agreement with Classical Hebrew syntax. In Ps 124,4 the final element נחלה in נחלה (“torrent”) seems to be a quasi-archaic addition on behalf of the verse rhythm⁴⁷.

A relatively late date is also suggested by some wordings and modes of expression. Outside the Songs of Ascents, the formula עשה שמים וארץ (“maker of heaven and earth”, Ps 121,2; 124,8; 134,3) is only found in post-exilic Psalms 115 (v. 15) and 146 (v. 6 — there the participle in absolute state: “who made...”). In Psalm 130, verse 2ba (“let your ears be attentive...”) is characteristic of the later post-exilic time (see Neh 1,6; 2 Chr 6,40; 7,15). Verse 3 recalls Ezra 9,15 (see also e.g. Isa 59,12; Ezra 9,6-7). In its statements on forgiveness (v. 4) and benevolence (v. 7) the psalm is related to a text like Neh 9,17.

Lastly, the historical perspective seems to be late. In Psalm 126⁴⁸ the restoration of Zion’s fortunes is remembered as a marvellous event causing great excitement. In fact, this turnabout was a series of events, divided over a long period and hardly spectacular for the most part: Cyrus’s decree regarding the Jerusalem temple, issued in 538 BC; a return of exiles, possibly under Cambyses; the building of the temple in 520-515; the return of those led by Ezra; the restoration of the walls of Jerusalem about 444⁴⁹. The psalm’s retrospect seems to draw on

⁴⁴ For יא cf. previous note. In ancient Aramaic יא and יא both occur; see KAI 214:7; 215:9; 233:6.14. Cf. H. BAUER – P. LEANDER, *Historische Grammatik der hebräischen Sprache des Alten Testaments* (Halle 1922) 631a.

⁴⁵ See HALAT, 1772, s.v. קִיִּי.

⁴⁶ See A. HURVITZ, “Originals and Imitations in Biblical Poetry: a Comparative Examination of 1 Sam 2:1-10 and Ps 113:5-9”, *Biblical and Related Studies Presented to Samuel Iwry* (eds. A. KORT – S. MORSCHAUER) (Winona Lake, IN 1985) 119-121. The occurrence of the ending י in the construct state of primal words like אב, “father”, and אח, “brother”, seems to testify the antiquity of this form.

⁴⁷ See GESENIUS – KAUTZSCH, § 90f; JOÜON – MURAOKA, § 93i.

⁴⁸ Cf. R. MOSIS, “‘Mit Jauchzen werden sie ernten’. Beobachtungen zu Psalm 126”, *Die alttestamentliche Botschaft als Wegweisung*. Festschrift für Hans Reinelt (Hrsg. J. ZMIJEWSKI) (Stuttgart 1990) 183.

⁴⁹ See Zech 4,9; 7-8; Ezra 2; 5,2.13-16; 6,3-5.14-15; 7-8; Neh 1-4; 6. For

traditional notions and existent phrasings, mainly from the prophets⁵⁰. In Psalm 133, Aaron (v. 2) is the archetype of the high priest. A status like that was not, probably, granted him much earlier than the time of Ezra⁵¹. Noteworthy are the late spellings in Ps 122,5 (דָּוִד, "David")⁵² and Ps 123,2 (אֲדֹנֵיהֶם, "their lord"; cf. Ps 147,5).

Psalms 135 and 136, too, must be of late origin, in view of the following data⁵³.

First, again, there are late linguistic elements, apparently originating from northern Hebrew or Aramaic: thus שׁ in Ps 135,2.8.10; 136,23; the suffix form כִּי in Ps 135,9⁵⁴; the perfect with י in Ps 135,12; 136,14.15.21⁵⁵. In Psalm 136, as a poetic text, the article in vv. 2-3, 5-6, 8-9, 20, 26 is not in line with classical usage.

Then, the texts show strong familiarity with other Old Testament texts. Psalm 135 is markedly "anthological". Verse 1, as we saw, was derived from Ps 113,1, v. 2a from Ps 134,1; v. 5 is largely identical with Exod 18,11a; vv. 6a and 15-20 are mainly from Psalm 115 (see there vv. 3-6, 8); v. 7 was taken from Jer 10,13 (= 51,16); the wording in v. 8 is almost literally after Exod 12,12; v. 9 reminds one of Deut 4,34 etc.; v. 11 is reminiscent of Deut 1,4 etc. In Psalm 136, vv. 7-9 presuppose Gen 1,14-18, while vv. 13-15 are based on Exod 14,21-29.

Ezra 2,1-2 cf. W. RUDOLPH, *Esra und Nehemia* (HAT I/20; Tübingen 1949) 16-19.

⁵⁰ Thus also W.R. TAYLOR, "The Book of Psalms", *The Interpreter's Bible* (New York etc. 1951-1957) IV, 664. See e.g. Isa 35,10; 52,10; Jer 33,7.9.11; Joel 2,21; Zeph 3,14.20. In other texts, too, events that are fundamental in national existence are presented as experienced by a later generation; see Jer 2,7; Amos 2,9-10; Ps 66,6 (cf. GESENIUS – KAUTZSCH, § 108g).

⁵¹ See R. de Vaux, *Les institutions de l'Ancien Testament* (Paris 1961-1967) II, 263-266.

⁵² Earlier texts in which this spelling occurs are 1 Kgs 11,36; Am 6,5; 9,11; Ezek 34,23. In the late book of Chronicles, however, it is common. It deserves notice that the standard spelling דָּוִד is found in the title of Ps 122 itself. A situation similar to that of Ps 122 is found in Song of Songs: in the book the *nota relationis* is שׁ, whereas the title of the book has אֲשֶׁר (JOÜON – MURAOKA, § 130e, n. 2).

⁵³ For Ps 135 see DELITZSCH, *Psalmen*, 820-821; ALLEN, *Psalms*, 287-288. For Ps 136 see ALLEN, *Psalms*, 295.

⁵⁴ See e.g. JOÜON – MURAOKA, § 94h.

⁵⁵ See DRIVER, *Tenses*, 158-159, 160-163.

The late origin of Psalm 136 is corroborated, in v. 26, by the appellation “God of heaven”, which fits in with the Persian period⁵⁶.

5. *A great festival*

Processions took place on festive occasions, when people gathered in Jerusalem and the sanctuary to rejoice in YHWH as their helper. The high frequency of the notions Israel, Jerusalem, Zion, blessing and peace in the Songs of Ascents is in keeping with a situation like that⁵⁷. It is not inconsistent with the festive occasion that prayers and even bitter complaints are found in these texts. After the exile Israel strongly realized that it had been on the verge of utter ruin, and to many of the people living conditions were far from easy. Moreover, the community still experienced the weight of guilt while suffering under foreign rule. In preparation to the celebrations in the temple, the Songs brought this up in a plaintive or meditative manner (see Ps 123; 124,1-5; 126,4; 130), while thankfulness, joy and confidence were predominant nevertheless (see Ps 121; 122; 124,6-8; 125; 126,5-6; 133).

There are good reasons to assume that Sukkoth (Lev 23,34.39) is the festival in which the Songs of Ascents had their place. First, Psalm 132 speaks of an introit of the ark into Zion. In 1 Kings 8 it is told that the ark was taken to Solomon’s new-built sanctuary at the festival in the seventh month — clearly the festival of Sukkoth (vv. 2, 65; cf. Lev 23,39; 2 Chr 7,10). Secondly, Psalm 134 addresses YHWH’s worshippers when they “stand in YHWH’s house by night” (v. 1). That festive night-time gatherings, introduced by processions, were an ancient tradition is suggested by Isa 30,29, where there is talk of singing “as in the night when a (*or*, the) holy feast is kept” and of joy “as when one walks to the sound of the flute to come to the mountain of YHWH”. In tractate Sukkah, as we saw, the Mishnah and the Tosephta have an account of gatherings which during the Feast of Booths took place in the temple court at night⁵⁸.

⁵⁶ See Jonah 1,9; Ezra 1,2; Neh 1,4.5; 2,4.20; 2 Chr 36,23; see also אֱלֹהֵי שָׁמַיָא in Ezra 5,12 etc. Cf. W.H. SCHMIDT, *THAT* I, 163.

⁵⁷ Ps 129,8 seems to quote words as were used — especially in Jerusalem during a festival — in greeting people who, unlike those meant in v. 5, “love Zion” (cf. Ps 122,6).

⁵⁸ Tosephta Sukkah 4,5 has a statement of rabbi Jehoshua ben Hananiah saying that in the days of celebration “we never saw a moment of sleep”

As stated before, the text of Psalm 135 is connected to that of the Songs of Ascents. Psalm 136 again is clearly related to its predecessor. By their traditional formulations, their “theological” slant and concrete historical references⁵⁹, Psalms 135 and 136 differ from Psalms 120–134 nevertheless. The difference suggests a difference in usage. While there is reason to believe that the Songs of Ascents were sung in the ascents to the sanctuary, Psalm 135, in view of its opening and its ending, and Psalm 136, in view of its refrain, must be fully liturgical compositions. They were used then in the festival liturgy as carried out in the temple at the great “feast of YHWH” (Lev 23,39)⁶⁰. The connection between ascent and temple liturgy, too, is reflected in the texts. Both when the ascent has ended and when the temple liturgy has started, the worshippers are “standing in the house of YHWH”, that is, in the temple court (Ps 134,1; 135,2). While still ascending, they taste a thing “good” and “pleasant”: fraternal togetherness in Zion (Ps 133,1.3). In the temple they praise Him who himself is “good”, whose name is “pleasant” (Ps 135,3).

The concluding psalms of praise, although related by their tenor and content, differ from one another again. In Psalm 135 the praise of God is denoted by the verbs הלל pi. (“praise”, vv. 1, 3, 21) en ברך pi. and qal (“bless”, vv. 19–21), both characteristic of proper hymnic style. Accordingly, the psalm emphasizes YHWH’s greatness, contrasting it with the idols’ futility. The verb ידה hi., denoting the praise in Psalm 136 (vv. 1–3, 26), is typical of thanksgiving songs⁶¹. In accordance with this, the psalm emphasizes what YHWH has done for Israel, confessing his goodness in a continually reiterated refrain. There can be no doubt that in post-

(לא היינו רואין שניה). Apparently the festal meetings were held not only on the first day of the festival, but also on following days, excepting sabbath. A similar situation is supposed in Ps 134,1, stating that YHWH’s “servants” (worshippers) are standing in his house “in the nights, by night” (בלילות). Consequently, the Songs of Ascents are likely to have been recited on successive festival days.

⁵⁹ For historical references in the Songs of Ascents see Pss 124, 126, 129.

⁶⁰ TAYLOR in “Psalms”, 694, too, relates Pss 135 and 136 to the temple liturgy of Sukkoth.

⁶¹ See e.g. Pss 9,2; 18,50; 30,13; also 28,7; 35,18; 42,6.12. See further CRÜSEMANN, *Formgeschichte*, 210–284. The statement also applies to Ps 118 (a liturgical Collective Song of Thanksgiving).

exilic times the commemoration of YHWH's deeds for Israel was essential in religious festivals. So songs of thanksgiving suited these festivals pre-eminently. That a hymn is followed by a thanksgiving song reminiscent of the hymn, partly almost identical with it, seems not quite natural in the context of cultic performance. From a liturgical viewpoint, Psalm 136 was preferable to its predecessor in that it was a simpler and more regular text, which moreover by its refrain offered the congregation an opportunity to join in the singers' praise of God (cf. Ps 118,2-4). I therefore suspect that Psalm 135, although included in the psalter, was replaced by Psalm 136 in the temple liturgy.

Psalm 136, liturgically presented, must have been a high point in the celebrations. In the profusely lighted temple court⁶² the massive song with the steadily repeated refrain, accompanied by the music of "cymbals, harps and lyres"⁶³ and, now and then, the piercing blast of the horns, must have made an impressive experience.

Lomanstraat 32-B
1075 RC Amsterdam
The Netherlands

Th. BOOIJ

SUMMARY

Psalms 120–134, the "Songs of Ascents", are a functional unity. In early rabbinical tradition concerning the Great Hallel, they seem to be linked with Psalms 135 and 136; in the texts themselves this connection is quite clear. The Songs, as a collection, and the two psalms of praise apparently stem from the later post-exilic period, when they were used during the festival of Sukkoth. The Songs were recited in processions to the sanctuary; the psalms of praise were part of the liturgy proper.

⁶² Cf. Mishnah Sukkah 5,3. For the phrase בית השואבה in that text see BORNHÄUSER, *Sukka*, 139-140.

⁶³ Cf. Ezra 3,10-11; 2 Chr 5,12-13; 7,6.

**“Why Tarry The Wheels of his Chariot?” (Judg 5,28):
Canaanite Chariots and Echoes of Egypt
in the Song of Deborah**

The Song of Deborah (Judg 5), perhaps the earliest example of verse in the canon of Biblical poetry, ostensibly catalogs an encounter between the early Israelite tribal league and forces led by the Canaanite general Sisera¹. Toward the end of the poem, the author postulates the reaction of Sisera’s mother as she waits for the expected victory of her son ... only to eventually face terrible disappointment. The quotation ascribed to her in this regard warrants close attention:

Through the window she looked forth, and peered,
the mother of Sisera, through the lattice:
Why is his chariot so long in coming?
Why tarry the wheels of his chariots? (v. 28)

The drama of the moment occurs at a climax within the poem. The battle has just ended, Sisera has just been killed in the most brutal way², and the society he would have otherwise championed

¹ On the antiquity of the poem, see D.A. ROBERTSON, *Linguistic Evidence in Dating Early Hebrew Poetry* (Missoula, MT 1972) 155; F.M. CROSS, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic* (London – Cambridge, MA 1973) 101-102; L.E. STAGER, “Archeology, ecology, and social history: Background themes to the Song of Deborah”, *Congress Volume Jerusalem 1986* (ed. J.A. EMERTON) (VTS 40; Leiden 1988) 221-232; J.D. SCHLOEN, “Caravans, Kenites, and *Casus Belli*: Enmity and Alliance in the Song of Deborah”, *CBQ* 55 (1993) 18-38. C.L. ECHOLS views the original version of the poem as a 12th century victory hymn secondarily expanded to include Yahwistic material; see his “*Tell Me, O Muse*”. The Song of Deborah (Judges 5) in the Light of Heroic Poetry (JSOTS; London – New York 2008). R. DE HOOP views the the name of Deborah as a secondary addition to an early poem; “Judges 5 Reconsidered: Which Tribes? What Land? Whose Song?”, *The Land of Israel in Bible, History and Theology* (eds. J. VAN RUITEN – J.C. DE VOS) (VTS; Leiden, 2009) 151-166. For a review of alternate positions regarding dating, including scholars who view the poem as post-10th century, see T. MAYFIELD, “The Account of Deborah (Judges 4-5) in Recent Research”, *CBR* 7 (2009) 324-325.

² On the poetic emphasis and mythic resonance in the depiction of Sisera’s death at the hands of Yael, see S.A. ACKERMAN, *Warrior, Dancer, Seductress*,

has been dealt a serious blow. Nascent Israel has repelled Sisera and affirmed its right to dwell in the central highlands; in response to this, Sisera's mother awaits his triumphant return, but no such triumph is forthcoming. In characterizing this woman and her dashed hopes, the poet emphasizes that it is not just Sisera who has failed, but that his choice of battlefield vehicle — the chariot — has failed as well. Yet nowhere in the preceding verses of the poem is there any mention of this mechanism of warfare. Why is a chariot highlighted at this moment, and in this manner?

To answer this question, we must consider the historical context in which the events within the poem took place, if not the composition of the poem itself³. Most scholars agree that the setting of the poem is the 12th century BCE, a time following the waning of Egyptian power in the area⁴. This was also a time when lowland Canaanite culture, reeling in the wake of the Egyptian collapse, saw tremendous socio-economic instability. This condition forged alliances between highland villagers of different ethnic patrimonies that doubtlessly led to the emergence of early Israel, in contradistinction to the remnants of lowland urban Canaanite dwellers⁵. The confrontation between Sisera and the

Queen. Women in Judges and Biblical Israel (New York 1998) 93-98; S. NIDITCH, *Judges*. A Commentary (OTL; Louisville, KY 2008) 76-82.

³ Though the tradition underlying the poem and its sociological details dovetail with 12th century events, it is likely that the current form of the text reflects redactional accretions and reworking. See K.L. SPARKS, *Ethnicity and Identity in Ancient Israel* (Winona Lake, IN 1998) 112-114; DE HOOP “Judges 5 Reconsidered”.

⁴ On the collapse of Egyptian hegemony in the Levant at the end of the Bronze Age, see the summary discussion by C. A. REDMOUNT, “Bitter Lives: Israel in and out of Egypt”, *The Oxford History of the Biblical World* (ed. M.D. COOGAN) (New York – Oxford 1998) 84-87. See also in the same volume the essay by L.E. STAGER, “Forging an Identity: The Emergence of Ancient Israel”, 90-91, 97-102, for a discussion of the proliferation of settlements in Canaan in the early Iron Age immediately following the decrease in Egyptian hegemony in the area.

⁵ SCHLOEN, “Caravans”, 35-38. On the conditions leading to the formation of communities in the highland frontier, see the recent overview of archaeology and theories of early national formation by W.G. DEVER, *Who Were The Ancient Israelites and Where Did They Come From?* (Grand Rapids, MI 2003); R.B. COOTE – K.W. WHITELAM, “The Emergence of Israel: Social Transformation and State Formation Following the Decline in late Bronze Age Trade”, *Semeia* 37 (1986) 118-125.

Israel recounted in the Song of Deborah reflects upon the tension between these populations, motivated on one hand by a desire to carve out a tenable existence in the highlands and, on the other, the persistence of lowland urban groups with designs on holding control over trade routes and arable tracts of land.

1. *Mythopoesis in Judg 5*

It must be noted from the outset that Judg 4 should be viewed as a separate and secondary accretion, based on Judg 5 but incorporating much material from alternative sources, and not of a high degree of historical reliability⁶. Judg 5 should be examined on its own terms; upon abstracting it from a specific (and problematic) historical context conditioned by the account in Judg 4, the poem collapses a number of experiences into a single event, including the mention of locales beyond the highlands such as Taanach and Megiddo (Judg 5,19). The recent study by C.L. Echols is the latest in a long tradition of scholarship to see the poem as originally composed following a specific, decisive victory⁷, and the mention of lowland locales would thus ostensibly detract from the poet's interest in characterizing highland Israelite society. However, there is reason to view Judg 5 not as applying to only one time or place. A specific event may indeed have prompted the original writer to compose the poem, but the composition invokes a number of social and economic factors that characterized a broad expanse of time and communal interaction that characterized most of the Iron Ia period⁸. More

⁶ For the dependence of Judg 4 on Judg 5, see the still compelling discussion of B. HALPERN, "The Resourceful Israelite Historian: The Song of Deborah and Israelite Historiography", *HTR* 76 (1983) 379-401. On the additional sources upon which the narrative account is based and the historical inconsistencies involved in its composition, see the insightful study of N. NA'AMAN, "Literary and Topographical Notes on the Battle of Kishon (Judges iv-v)", *VT* 40 (1990) 423-436.

⁷ ECHOLS, "Tell Me O Muse".

⁸ M.Z. BRETTLER, in fact, suggests that the poem was chanted routinely before warfare: *The Book of Judges* (London – New York 2002) 69, and it is reasonable to see additional socio-economic and military details akin to those noted by Stager incorporated into the poem in successive rehearsals in a redactional manner suggested by Echols, De Hoop and others.

importantly, however, these events are invoked in a symbolic manner; the landscape upon which they transpired and the individuals cast as their facilitators are subjected to a process of mythopoesis⁹. The mention of the Kishon river as a factor in the defeat of the Canaanite forces serves as a potent example:

The torrent Kishon swept them away,
The onrushing torrent, the torrent Kishon (Judg 5,21)

The poet's depiction of the force of the river has led to speculation that natural elements impeded the success of the Canaanite forces in battle. However, as S.A. Ackerman has correctly noted, the Kishon river does not flood, and its depiction in the poem is not an account of the river's actual physical traits creating an obstacle for Sisera's chariot brigade¹⁰. The depiction of the river deploys the language of metaphor and myth, likening its waters to the waters of chaos, creation and destruction evident in other examples of ancient Hebrew mythic poetry (Pss 29,3; 77,16-19, etc.)¹¹. The mythological character of the reference to Kishon is reinforced by its formalistic parallel to the depiction of Yael's killing of Sisera later in the poem:

At her feet he sunk, he fell, he lay;
at her feet he sunk, he fell;
where he sunk, there he fell down dead. (Judg 5,26-27)

As is often noted, Judg 5,27 recalls the characterization of Anat from the Ugaritic Baal cycle; Yael's act against Sisera is remembered in the poem as ringing of the same ancient myth as that of the Ugaritic text¹². Israel's victory over the enemy is

⁹ Early Israelite writers in general conceive of the land in mythic terms as the meeting place between the nation and its deity (e.g., Deut 33,2). This conceptual standard is found within the epic material of the Pentateuch. See T. HIEBERT, *The Yahwist's Landscape. Nature and Religion in Early Israel* (New York – Oxford 1996) 30-116. Regardless of one's view regarding the source-critical model through which Hiebert enters into his study of the material, the features of the literature he examines reveals a highly mythic concept of topography and agrarian existence.

¹⁰ ACKERMAN, *Warrior, Dancer*, 46.

¹¹ ACKERMAN, *Warrior, Dancer*, 46; NIDITCH, *Judges*, 77.

¹² For a full consideration of this parallel, see ACKERMAN, *Warrior, Dancer*, 51-64.

therefore not strictly utilitarian but resonates with sacral significance, as her killing of Sisera is mythically expressed. It is significant, then, that in both the Kishon and Yael passages, the events being depicted are stressed through repetition; the Kishon is “mythologized” in a manner akin to Yael, ascribing to it additional dimensions beyond the observable just as Yael’s killing of Sisera is presented in multiple temporal dimensions. This accounts for the Kishon’s unnatural depiction as a torrential force. As per Ackerman’s observations, the river is removed from the realm of plain history and woven into the realm of divine action and will.

The mythic patterning within the poem extends even further. Deborah and Barak appear to be mythic *personae* cast as historical figures within the drama of the poem. This is not to suggest that historical individuals do not lay beneath the current presentation of these figures, but it is notable that the relationship between Deborah and Barak is unique within the book of Judges and indeed within the entire Hebrew Bible. Deborah is depicted in the poem as the chief religious authority of her day (Judg 5,7), but as the poem implies (and as the later tradition in Judg 4 remembers her), she does not head the battle herself (in contrast to the other warrior-deliverers in the book of Judges). And though Barak is a military leader akin to the other Judges, no other warrior has a woman accompany him into battle; indeed, within the poem, Barak appears as a lesser force than his female counterpart. The Deborah/Barak relationship must be considered alongside Hab 3,5, which describes the forces that accompany YHWH into divine battle:

Before him goes devastation (דבר)
And the fiery bolts (רשף) are at his feet (ברגליו)

The parallel between this imagery and that encountered in the Song of Deborah (Judg 5,15) is nearly identical¹³:

And the princes of Issachar were with Deborah (דבורה)
As was Issachar, so was Barak (ברק)
Into the valley they rushed forth at his feet (ברגליו)

¹³ For this connection, I am indebted to the insights of my former student Caryn Amy King, who pointed this similarity out to me. See further CROSS, *Canaanite Myth*, 102-103, M.S. SMITH, *The Origins of Biblical Monotheism* (New York – Oxford 2001) 47, 68.

The depiction of Deborah and Barak follows the ancient warrior myth behind Hab 3,5. Perhaps the later historiographer's note that Deborah's is a “woman of flames” (אִשָּׁה לִפְדֻת in Judg 4,4) echoes this association, maintaining in the narrative account the balance between דָּבָר and רָשָׁף on the level of myth expressed in the poem. To a degree, the myth has been adjusted: not only is Barak's name an adjustment from the mythic figure of רָשָׁף, but a further distinction is found in the fact that rather than רָשָׁף rushing forth at the feet of the divine warrior (as in Hab 3,5), it is the Israelite militia that rushes forth at Barak's feet.

Nevertheless, this is but another indication of the poet's predilection for symbolic discourse, and just as myth is “brought down” into a more tangible topographical context (such as with the Kishon), so also may physical, geographic and social *topoi* be elevated into mythic archetypes and symbols. The mention of lowland Canaanite urban regions (Taanach, Megiddo) should be viewed in this light, for both locales symbolize the cultures against which nascent Israel defined itself, and which continued to cause allergic cultural reactions in later periods as well. Thus rather than seeing the poem as a recounting of a single, decisive battle, the rhetorical strategy deployed by its author suggests instead a meditation on collective memories regarding ongoing clashes between highland Israel and its lowland Canaanite neighbors¹⁴, as well as residual tensions between the tribes that were expected to bond together under the banner of common cause. These memories are given mythic weight, making clear that the poem reifies a set of cultural values that were sustained broadly within highland village culture.

With this in mind, we may turn to the symbolic dimensions of the image of Sisera's chariot — the sudden mention of which must be viewed in a similar light. In the preceding late Bronze Age the urban Canaanite kings and their agents had close contact with the Egyptian administrative presence, and served as proxies to the Pharaohs in maintaining Egyptian interests throughout the region¹⁵. In the early Iron Age, with the echoes of a collapsed (or collapsing) Egyptian

¹⁴ This dovetails with BRETTLE's (*Book of Judges*, 69) observations regarding the poem as a pre-war rallying cry.

¹⁵ C. HIGGINBOTHAM, “Elite Emulation and Egyptian Governance in Ramesside Canaan”, *Tel Aviv* 23 (1996) 154-169.

imperial system still resonating in public consciousness among the populations that settled the highlands, associations between Egypt and the urban Canaanite elites of the lowland would have been inevitable, especially if elements of the latter (such as Sisera) engaged in acts to subdue the former (highland Israel). Indeed, other Biblical texts preserve this equivalency and express it in later legislative language. For example, the equation of Canaanite and Egyptian culture underlies Lev 18,1-2:

And YHWH spoke unto Moses, saying: Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them: I am YHWH your God. After *the doings of the land of Egypt, wherein ye dwelt*, shall ye not do; and after *the doings of the land of Canaan, whither I bring you*, shall ye not do; *neither shall ye walk in their statutes*.

This passage is part of a law code that repeatedly reaches back into early Israelite experience, and bears witness to the depth of the Egypt-Canaan association in national memory¹⁶. The phrase “their statutes” applies to both Egypt and Canaan — they are placed in semantic parallel to each other, and in opposition to YHWH’s laws. The aforementioned passage from Leviticus carries forward an impulse underlying Judg 5,28 and its emphasis on Sisera’s chariot: for the poet, the lowland Canaanites whose culture was so deeply shaped by Egyptian hegemony had adopted their machinery of military conquest¹⁷.

¹⁶ Lev 18 is widely regarded as part of the Holiness Code, the origins of which should be identified with the reign of Hezekiah in the late 8th century BCE, following the implications of I. KNOHL, *The Sanctuary of Silence*. The Priestly Torah and the Holiness School (Minneapolis, MN 1995) 200-224. The final form of the Holiness Code, however, should be seen as the product of the Babylonian exile, a time that saw antique intellectual *topoi* deployed in the service of legal polemics; see M. LEUCHTER, “The Manumission Laws in Leviticus and Deuteronomy: The Jeremiah Connection”, *JBL* 127 (2008) 635-653. Regardless of when one chooses to date the Holiness legislation, the period of the late 8th century through the mid 6th century witnesses a resuscitation of ancient tropes in a variety of literary contexts, ranging from the redaction of early wisdom sayings in Hezekiah’s time (Prov 25,1) to the exilic prophet Ezekiel recalling the indigenous origins of Israel in the time before the mature emergence of the tribal league (Ezek 16,3). The author of Lev 18, then, would have lived at a time when the intellectual elite of Israel were well aware of the oldest traditions upon which later conceptual edifices were constructed.

¹⁷ A similar sentiment is implied in Samuel’s denunciation of kingship found in 1 Sam 8,11, where chariotry is identified as a hallmark of abusive

2. *Egyptian Chariotry and the Merneptah Stele*

The greatest symbol of Egyptian prowess on the battlefield in the late Bronze Age was the chariot. This vehicle of warfare had assisted the Hyksos in taking control of the Egyptian empire in the late 18th century BCE, and innovations in chariot design is regarded as a major contributing factor to the successful re-assertion of native Egyptian power following the expulsion of the Hyksos in the 16th century¹⁸. The Ramesside kings especially promoted themselves through chariot imagery and claims of being master charioteers; the reliefs at Karnak commemorating the battle of Kadesh especially emphasize the chariot skills of Rameses II. Egyptian hegemony in the lowland plains of Canaan were doubtlessly aided by the formidability of their chariot forces throughout the late Bronze Age¹⁹, and the retention of this technology among Canaanite lowlanders in the early Iron Age perpetuated the idea and imagery of Egyptian military strategies.

The attention drawn to Sisera's chariot in Judg 5,28 doubtlessly relates to the fact that while chariots were suited for battle on the open plains, they were ineffective in campaigns that took place in highland hills such as those where early Israel established themselves by the late 13th century BCE²⁰. The case of Merneptah's campaign (ca. 1210 BCE) sheds light on the role of chariotry and its resonance in Israelite imagination. Though Merneptah boasts in his victory stele that he managed to destroy “Israel” in his campaign at the end of the 13th century, archaeological remains do not support

kingship. In this case, however, the text utilizes tropes from Assyrian sources and likely transforms an old tradition ascribed to Samuel into a meditation on 8th–7th century experiences. See M. LEUCHTER, “A King Like All The Nations: The Composition of I Sam 8,11-18”, *ZAW* 117 (2005) 543-558.

¹⁸ P.R.S. MOOREY, “The Emergence of the Light, Horse-Drawn Chariot in the Near East, ca. 2000-1500 B.C.E.”, *World Archaeology* 18 (1986) 208, 211; C. MEYERS, “Procreation, Production and Protection: Male-Female Balance in Early Israel”, *JAAR* 51 (1983) 577.

¹⁹ On the firmly set administrative occupation of the lowland cities, see N. NA'AMAN, “Economic Aspects of the Egyptian Occupation of Canaan”, *IEJ* 31 (1981) 177-179.

²⁰ There is a general consensus that some form of an Israelite social entity existed in the central Palestinian highlands by the end of the 13th century BCE (see, e.g., STAGER, “Forging an Identity”, 90-91), though the process by which this entity coalesced remains a matter of debate.

this claim, as settlements in the highlands from that time show no disturbance or disruption until well beyond the period of Merneptah's reign²¹. Indeed, the rhetoric of the inscription is itself indicative of this fact: Merneptah's scribe boasts of other geographic locales that fell to the king, but (as is well known) refers to Israel as a "people", not as a land²². There is no mention made of an area that is dominated by his armies, which suggests that the author of the inscription is deploying a sly rhetorical device to soften or blur the memory of a less-than-successful campaign against the highlands. If Merneptah utilized chariots in a manner consistent with other 19th dynasty Pharaohs — a likelihood, given the fact that the depiction of his predecessors as master charioteers stems from his own time²³ — then his scribe's choice to avoid mentioning Israelite land holdings may relate to the inefficacy of Merneptah's chariot brigades in that area of Canaan.

As a matter of propaganda, the scribe could make the amorphous claim that Merneptah had dominated a people called Israel, but the ambiguity regarding where this Israel was to be found follows the device of deliberate ambiguity in royal propaganda when full victory could not be declared²⁴. The annals

²¹ For an overview of settlements and dates of destruction in the late 13th through the mid 11th centuries in the central highlands, see R.D. MILLER, *Chieftains of the Highland Clans. A History of Israel in the 12th and 11th centuries B.C.* (Grand Rapids, MI 2005) 97-103.

²² For a summary discussion, see MILLER, *Chieftains*, 93-95. The people-determinative occurs in other contexts within the stele, though as G.A. RENDSBURG notes, the determinative in relation to Israel is unique — "The Date of the Exodus and the Conquest/Settlement: A Case for the 1100s", *VT* 42 (1992) 518. It is notable however that the stele's presentation of the Sea People also present them as landless, for it is clear that whatever measure Merneptah took against the Sea People, they maintained a geographic foothold especially on the southeastern Mediterranean coast. In both cases, then, the depiction of people independent of a geographic location is offered in relation to groups that clearly persisted unabated and beyond Egyptian control.

²³ On the dating of the relevant details to Merneptah's reign rather than that of Rameses II, see F. YURCO, "Merneptah's Palestinian Campaign", *JSEA* 8 (1978) 70.

²⁴ Here I differ in opinion from the reading offered by RENDSBURG ("The Date of the Exodus", 517-518) that the Merneptah stele refers to the domination of an Israel during a period of enslavement, which in his view explains the people-determinative as opposed to a regional depiction.

of Tiglath Pileser I (late 12th-early 11th centuries BCE) provide a fairly proximate parallel to this propagandistic strategy, delineating that ruler's accomplishments in a way that exaggerates the historical reality. Notably, Tiglath Pileser's scribes attribute to him an accomplishment rather similar to Merneptah's claim regarding Israel's "seed", when he claims to have utterly demolished the fields of Kummuhu upon his first campaign there²⁵. The trope of burning farmlands in the Assyrian chronicle becomes a metaphor for the complete conquest of a people, though it is clear from the various chronicles of this same king that there was, indeed, no such complete conquest. Rather, Tiglath Pileser had to return to the same region several times before subduing its population.

The Merneptah Stele's use of similar language and imagery is suggestive of a similar manipulation or exaggeration of the reality regarding his interaction with Israel. Whatever skirmish transpired between him and the early Israelites of the late 13th century BCE, his success must have been embarrassingly protracted²⁶. The lack of an outright boast of domination over the totality of Israelite territory suggests that his chariot forces were unable to penetrate the hilly terrain these Israelites claimed as their homeland²⁷. Consequently, the survival of the hinterland villages against the efforts of later lowland Canaanites such as Sisera may similarly be credited to the ineffectual nature of chariots as instruments of warfare in the highland hills. Even if (as the poem suggests) some

The stele appears to declare victories in a succession of battles, and the allusion to an already enslaved people seems out of place with the rhetorical aims of such military propaganda.

²⁵ The text appears in A.K. GRAYSON, *Assyrian and Babylonian Chronicles* (Locust Valley, NY 1970) 189.

²⁶ There are some indications that his campaign met with some degree of success, but was by no means a sweeping victory. The extent of his success in the region appears to end just south of the central-northern highlands, which supports the view espoused here that his chariot brigades were unable to penetrate the hinterland hills north of the region of Benjamin. On the evidence suggesting a limited scope to Merneptah's successful efforts in this part of Canaan, see RENDSBURG, "The Date of the Exodus", 519-520.

²⁷ A later parallel utilizing a similar rhetorical strategy is that of Sennacherib's famous claim that Hezekiah was kept "like a bird in a cage" during the former's Judahite campaign of 701 BCE. Sennacherib's words suggest victory, though this contrasts the strategy deployed at Lachish and elsewhere in the same campaign of destroying the city, suggesting a stalemate.

battles were waged in the lowlands, the chariot brigades were restricted to those contexts and could not penetrate the highlands, and it is this which is recalled and emphasized in Judg 5,28. The poet behind the Song of Deborah draws attention to the chariot and its deep association with Egyptian campaigns in characterizing the *Kulturkampf* between Israel and the Canaanite forces represented by Sisera²⁸.

* *
*
*

The strategies that worked for the imperial armies in the plains fell flat in the hill country, and this inefficacy undoubtedly contributed to the independence of early Israel as they staked out their territory in the highlands. When the opening lines of the Song of Deborah celebrate YHWH's mythic prowess as a warrior (vv. 2-5), it must be understood against the lingering memory of late Bronze Age and early Iron Age confrontations which resulted in Israel's favor. This meeting of myth and history unfolds as the defeat of lowland Canaanite forces attempting to secure what the Pharaohs could not (and in the same manner), and likewise failing²⁹. The successes of meager hinterland militias against Canaanite brigades utilizing advanced Egyptian technologies such as the chariot clearly affected the manner in which the later historiographer behind Judg 4 envisioned the event, invoking Jezreel — the former crown

²⁸ The persistence of the chariot as an image of a brand of royal elitism to be avoided is found in a wide spectrum of Biblical texts. The report of David's hamstringing of horses (2 Sam 8,4) should be seen as a gesture to assure the public that he had no interest in amassing a chariot brigade, though it is clear that David did secure horses for other royal and possibly military purposes; see B. HALPERN, *David's Secret Demons*. Messiah, Murderer, Traitor, King (Grand Rapids, MI 2001) 138-140. However, the late Deuteronomic legislator behind Deut 17,16 clearly remembers the social ethic with which David was concerned in specifying that an Israelite king should not amass horses, presumably for the purpose of chariotry. This is consistent with the observation above that late 8th – mid 6th century scribes were cognizant of events and intellectual currents of high antiquity.

²⁹ NIDITCH, *Judges*, 77; ACKERMAN, *Warrior, Dancer*, 46.

property of the Egyptian Pharaohs — as a major locus of the conflict³⁰.

It is perhaps for this reason that the poet invokes the lowland cities of Taanach and Megiddo, implying the domination of the highland population — championed by their divine patron YHWH — over the royal pretenders of those urban centers. It may also be for this reason that the very opening line of the poem implies that the underlying forces that led to religious zeal and sacral devotion in Israel were motivated with the shadow of the Pharaohs still looming in the background (בפרעה פרעה בִּישְׂרָאֵל)³¹. However, the rhetorical weight of the experiences encapsulated in the poem must have left a deep impression on the mythopoeic imagination in early Israel as well. When the poet behind the Song at the Sea speaks of YHWH casting the chariots of Egypt into the Sea (Exod 15,1b-5), it may well be the memory of early conflicts against Canaanite emulators of Egyptian tactics that moved him to transmute historical experience into a liturgical verse that, in the end, both transcended and shaped historical conceptions³².

Department of Religion
Temple University
Philadelphia, PA 19122, USA

Mark LEUCHTER

³⁰ N. NA'AMAN, “Pharaonic Lands in the Jezreel Valley in the late Bronze Age”, *Society and Economy in the Eastern Mediterranean (c. 1500-1000 B.C.)* (eds. M. HELTZER – E. LIPINSKI) (Leuven 1988) 177-185.

³¹ Most commentators translate this phrase as a variant on “when locks were grown long in Israel”, implying a connection to Nazirite behavior and holy warfare (see among others SCHLOEN, “Caravans”, 21-22; ACKERMAN, *Warrior, Dancer*, 32-33). R.D. MILLER, “When Pharaohs Ruled: On the Translation of Judges 5:2”, *JTS* 59 (2008) 650-654, however, makes a strong case for the term as a wordplay on “Pharaoh”, פֶּרַעַח. The phrase may thus be a deliberate double-entendre.

³² A common view is that the Song of the Sea in Exod 15,1b-18 either predates (however slightly) the Song of Deborah in Judg 5 (see, e.g., CROSS, *Canaanite Myth*, 123, 140) or was contemporaneous with it (ROBERTSON, *Linguistic Evidence*, 154-155). However, as the foregoing discussion suggests, the myth of the divine warrior defeating Egypt appears to be a transformation of the concepts embedded in the Song of Deborah. This does not necessarily require the linear dependence of one text upon another, but it suggests that the ideas underlying the Song of Deborah were subsequently developed into the liturgical myth now found in the Song of the Sea. The two works may well have developed

SUMMARY

The closing verses of the Song of Deborah include a curious reference to chariotry (Judg 5,28) at a rhetorically potent moment in the poem. The present study examines the implications of the use of this image against the mythopoeic impulses in the poem, the larger historical background of early Israel's confrontations with Canaanite aggression in the 12th century BCE and the memory of Egyptian strategies of hegemony from the late Bronze Age. The effects of these memories and experiences leave profound impressions in the social and mythic matrices embedded in a broad spectrum of Biblical traditions.

in relative temporal tandem, with one representing a more folkloristic tradition (the Song of Deborah) while the other became the basis for a cultic recitation and the result of a process of liturgization. This does not, however, necessarily lead to the views of some scholars that the Song of the Sea was composed by a member of the Jerusalem Temple establishment during the monarchic period, e.g., B.F. BATTO, *Slaying the Dragon. Mythmaking in the Biblical tradition* (Louisville, KY 1992) 109; H. SPIECKERMANN, *Heilsgegenwart. Eine Theologie der Psalmen* (FRLANT 148; Göttingen 1989) 96-115, esp. 114. The terminology often cited as specific to the Zion tradition is entirely applicable to a pre (or at least non) monarchic setting, and may well have influenced royal literature. See D.S. VANDERHOOF, "Dwelling Beneath the Sacred Space: A Proposal for Reading", *JBL* 118 (1999) 627-628; W.H.C. PROPP, *Exodus 1-18* (AB 2; New York 1998) 532-533, 542-545.

ANIMADVERSIONES

The Oak of Weeping*

Deborah, Rebekah's nurse died and was buried under the oak below Bethel and it was named אלון בכוח (Gen 35,8); this name was interpreted to mean "the oak of weeping". The JPS transliterate here, while LXX has "The Oak of Mourning" (βάλανος πένθους). Judges 4,5 refers to a different Deborah, the prophetess, who sat beneath the palm 'tree of Deborah' between Ramah and Bethel. Some identify these trees as the same, but there is no proof of this. In Genesis, we read about an oak tree, while in Judges, about a palm tree, in addition, they are not close geographically. There are some biblical traditions about a place name בכים (Weepers) in Judges 2,5; 20,23.26. It is possibly the same "oak of weeping" mentioned in Genesis, located near Beth El. Indeed the LXX in its translation of Judges 2, 1 added Beth el next to בכים "place of weeping, and to Bethel". Thus, it might be that all those traditions refer to the same place¹.

If indeed בכים (weepers) and אלון בכוח (oak of weeping) in Genesis are the same, it is important to note that the passage in Judges says that the Israelites cried and made sacrifices there. Scholars pointed out that it is possible that what we have here is a connection with mourning rites for the dead vegetation deity, Baal-Hadad (Zech 12, 11); and Tammuz (Ezek 8, 14)². Providing food to the dead or honoring them with a meal was a common practice in the ancient world. People believed that the dead could influence the world of the living; they could help the living if the latter attended to their needs, or harm them if they neglected them. The Bible

* I dedicate this article in loving memory of Anna E. Chernak a religious true believer.

¹ Amit, identified בכים with Beth-el. According to her this identification was a polemic against the ancient northern shrine on the part of the pre-Deuteronomistic Judean writer. See: Y. AMIT, "Bochim, Bethel and Hidden Polemic (Judg 2, 1-5)", *Studies in Historical Geography and Biblical Historiography, Presented to Zecharia Kallai* (eds. G. GALIL – M. WEINFELD) (VTS 81; Leiden 2000) 121-131.

² J. GRAY, *Joshua, Judges and Ruth* (London 1967) 253-254; J.A. SOGGIN, *Judges. A Commentary* (Philadelphia, PA 1981) 30-31; in contrast Butler quotes P. Miller and E. Merrill who say that the offering was celebratory. However, this is unlikely since weeping and fasting are also mentioned. See: T.C. BUTLER, *Judges* (Nashville, TN 2009) 446-447.

condemn such practices as it appears in Deut 26,14 “I have not eaten of the tithe while I was mourning, or removed any of it while I was unclean, or offered any of it to the dead.” Thus, Stade spoke about Israel’s ancestral grave and its close relation to worship, he points to the ‘oak of weeping’ over the grave of Deborah³. However, we have to stress that the place did not serve as a place of worship and sacrifice, at the time of Jacob. Moreover, the nurse was brought from afar, and therefore, she couldn’t be an object of worship to the Israelites.

In Genesis 24, 59 we read that Rebekah was sent with her nurse (מִנְקָה) along with Abraham servant. In Genesis 35, 8 Rebekah’s nurse is identified as Deborah. The Hebrew מִנְקָה is a wet nurse as this term appears for the baby Moses (Exod 2, 7). However, Rebekah did not need a service of a wet nurse. We believe that Deborah, besides acting as a guardian to Rebekah had additional duties as the name place of her burial implies.

Dirges or laments were sung at the funerals of both important people and commoners, as well as in times of extreme crisis — e.g., war, drought, and plague. The Bible refers to professional keeners as *šarot* “female singers” (2 Chr 35,25), *meqonnenôt* “female dirge-singers” (Jer 9,16[17]), and *ḥakamôt* “skilled women” (ibid.). They were experts in their craft, trained to sing or compose funeral songs, who passed their special skills from generation to generation (Jer 9,19[20]). The profession may have been dominated by women because they are considered to be more emotional and sensitive. In the ancient Near East, too, there were professional mourners of both sexes. We read about the screechers; *bakkītu* wailing women; and the *lallaru*; fem. *lallartu/lallarītu* or professional wailers. Phoenician reliefs, such as the sarcophagus of King Ahiram of Byblos (tenth century BCE), depict female keeners. We should also recall the passage in Ezekiel about the women who sit and weep (מבכות) for Tammuz (Ezek 8,14). Cooke pointed out that the worship of Tammuz continued till the middle ages. The Syrians of Harran in N. Mesopotamia kept during the month of Tammuz the feast of the mourning women in the honor of the god Ta’ûz⁴. Interestingly, the Akkadian term *bakkītu* which means “wailing women”, appears in one of Cuneiform Texts from Babylonian Tablets in the following way: “*lu-u ba-ki-tu mu [šēniqtu attu]*”, translated: “whether you be a wailing woman, a nurse”⁵. As we pointed out already Rebekah was no longer a younger woman and hardly needed a guardian at this stage of her life. Thus it is more probable

³ B. STADE, *Biblische Theologie des Alten Testaments* (Tübingen 1905-1911) I, 51.

⁴ G.A. COOKE, *The Book of Ezekiel* (Edinburgh 1936) 98.

⁵ CT.16.10. v. 25f.

and based on her origin that Deborah in her last stages of her life served as a professional crier. Therefore not surprisingly when they buried her under the tree they called it *אלון בכות* a reference to her duties as a professional crier. Moreover, the place named *בכית* in Judges 2,5 received its name because the Israelite cried there (v. 4).

Like, Deborah who was buried under a tree, we read about King Saul and his sons who were buried under a tree. Thus, it appears that we have here an ancient custom of burying dead people under a tree. According to the Book of Samuel, the people of Jabesh-gilead removed the bodies of Saul and his sons, burned them, and buried the bones under the tamarisk tree in Jabesh (1 Sam 31,11-13). However, in the parallel text of 1 Chr 10,11-12, there is no mention of the burning of the bodies. In this text we read that they buried the bones, but this time it was under an oak tree. Deborah, Rebekah's nurse and King Saul and his sons were buried under a tree because trees served as a memorial to the dead. Interment under a tree may have been a symbolic act intended to perpetuate the memory of the deceased, because the tree was a symbol of eternal life⁶. In addition of serving as a memorial to the dead, trees served as a land mark that helped to identify the burial site. Trees were often used to mark the boundary between fields belonging to different owners. Indeed, in the story of the purchase of the cave of Machpelah by Abraham for a burial site for his wife Sarah, we read that he purchased the cave and all the trees around the field (Gen 23,17). Specifications of trees in land sale were common in ancient contracts in all periods.

The burial of Deborah under an oak tree (*אלון*) is not the only burial under a tree mentioned in Genesis 35. Already in verse 4 we read about the burial of the false gods under a terebinth (*אלה*). There is a contrast here between burial of false gods and the burial of Deborah. For the idols buried the narrator used the root *סָתַן* which means "to hide, conceal, especially in earth", while, for Deborah's burial the Bible uses the more usual root *קָבַר* which means "to bury". As for the burial of false gods Sarna suggested that: "the internment of the idols intact under the tree may be intention to neutralize veneration of the terebinth"⁷. Though we suggest the burial of Deborah under the tree served as a memorial to the dead, it was also a symbolic act intended to perpetuate the memory of the deceased. However, that fact remains that Deborah and the idols were buried under a tree. By contrast, in verse 19 we read that Rachel was

⁶ E. BLOCH-SMITH, *Judahite Burial Practices and Beliefs about the Dead* (Sheffield 1992) 115.

⁷ N.M. SARNA, *The JPS Torah Commentary, Genesis*, 240.

buried and Jacob erected a pillar over her grave. This leaves us wondering if burial under a tree was less desirable or whether no tree was available in Rachel's case.

Examination of burial sites and custom reveals that in ancient times important people were buried in family tombs. The patriarchs and matriarchs, except for Rachel, were all buried in the cave of Machpelah. Jacob's body was brought back to Canaan from Egypt to be interred there (Gen 50,13). Later, in the period of the Judges and the early monarchy, we read that the dead were buried on their family estates and in tombs. Indeed the Bible uses the biblical idiom "lie down with one's father" (Gen 47,30; Deut 31,16; 2 Sam 7,12; 35 times in 1–2 Kgs and 2 Chr); it is usually meant a peaceful death. In contrast the Bible indicates that kings that were wicked were not buried with their ancestors⁸. In addition, for kings that were murdered there is no information about their burial⁹.

The Prophet Uriah the son of Shemaiah from Kiriath-jearim was extradited from Egypt by King Jehoiakim and put to the sword (Jer 26, 23) for seconding Jeremiah's political opposition to the king's anti-Babylonian policy. According to the second part of the verse, the unfortunate prophet's corpse was tossed negligently (וַיִּשְׁלֵךְ has the connotation of discarding something unwanted or repulsive) into a mass paupers' grave. Jehoiakim did not allow Uriah to be buried in his ancestral tomb, thereby disgracing him after his death as well. Uriah was put to the sword, as prescribed by the law concerning those who defy the king. While, in 2 Kings 23,6 we read that King Josiah burned the image of Asherah at wadi Kidron, beat it to dust and threw the dust of it upon the graves of the common people. Wealthy people were buried in caves hollowed out of hillsides: whereas the poor people were buried in a common graveyard, essentially a large pit. According to Radak, Josiah threw the dust on the graves of the people who worshiped the idols in order to humiliate them. Indeed in the parallel text 2 Chr 34,4 we read: "and strewed it onto graves of those who had sacrifice to them".

Deborah was Rebekah's nurse, from childhood, acted as her guardian and was a professional crier. Even though she was part of the family, only the patriarchs and matriarchs were buried in the family tombs, the cave of Machpelah. Because of her lower class status she was buried under the tree like the common people who were buried in common grave yard. As

⁸ See for example 2 Kgs 21,18 where Manasseh was buried "in the garden of his house, in the garden of Uzza," as was his son Amon (2 Kgs 21,26).

⁹ See for example: Nadab, Elah, Zechariah, Shallum, Pekahiah, Pekah (1 Kgs 15,28; 16,10; 2 Kgs 15,10.14.25.30).

we mentioned King Saul and his sons were buried first under a tree which served as memorial to them. According to the Biblical narrative, when the men of Jabesh-gilead heard what the Philistines did to Saul, they went and took Saul's corpse and his sons' corpses from the wall of Beth-shan. According to 1 Sam 31,12-13, the people of Jabesh-gilead burned the corpses of Saul and his sons before they buried the bones. Both traditional commentators and modern scholars, puzzled by this, since cremation was not practiced in Israel; thus, they have advanced various explanations¹⁰. The Sages, for example, explained that they burned the personal effects of the deceased¹¹. Hence, it is more plausible that in this case the bodies were cremated to prevent the Philistines from abusing the corpses. Thus, we can see that the burning of the corpses and the burial under a tree was done under duress, an urgent act performed out of mercy¹². Burial under a tree was reserved for common people not for the king of Israel. Therefore, not surprisingly we read later that king David took the bones of Saul and his son Jonathan and gave them an honorable burial. King David reburied them in the family grave (2 Sam 21,14).

In conclusion Deborah, besides acting as a guardian to Rebekah, had additional duties as a *bakkitu*, a professional crier, and, therefore, her burial cite was called *אלון בכות*. Important people such as the patriarchs and matriarchs and, later the kings of Israel were buried in family tombs. Common people were buried in common grave yard or under a tree. Since Deborah did not belong to the family, she was buried under a tree.

The University of Memphis
301 Mitchell Hall
Memphis, TN 38152, U.S.A.

Shaul BAR

¹⁰ According to Driver, here *va-yišrefu* does not mean burning at all; rather, it is related to *šaraf* "resin", and the verse should be rendered "they anointed them there with resinous spices." See: G.R. DRIVER, "A Hebrew Burial Custom", *ZAW* 66 (1954) 315; Budde holds that the reference to cremation is a gloss added by a later author who detested Saul and wanted to blacken his name. See: D.K. BUDDE, *Die Bücher Samuel* (Tübingen 1902) 192.

¹¹ See: T. Shabbat 7(8),18; T. Sanh 4,2-3; B. Av.Zar 11a.

¹² Burning the deceased's bones was considered an awful crime (Amos 2,11). However, here it is considered an honorable act. See: D.T. TSUMURA, *The First Book of Samuel* (Grand Rapids, MI 2007) 655.

SUMMARY

Deborah, Rebekah's nurse, died and was buried under an oak tree and it was named אלון בכּוּה. Two major questions should be raised here. One, why was the place named אלון בכּוּה? Second, why was she buried under a tree? This short paper will posit that the place was called אלון בכּוּה as a reference to Deborah being a *bakkītu* a professional crier. Burial under a tree was for common people, and because of her lower class status, she was buried under the tree like the common people who were buried in common grave yard.

Are the Additions in LXX Job 2,9a-e to be deemed as the Old Greek text?*

The Greek version of the book of Job is substantially shorter than the Massoretic Text (MT)¹. Compared to LXX Proverbs, another freely² translated unit, it can be deemed as a shortened, abbreviated text³. LXX Proverbs, to the contrary, is an expansionistic text with a multitude of additions, transpositions and very significant, the difference of the order of chapters 24–31 in the LXX⁴. It remains a difficult issue to determine the origin of these differences. One way of doing this is to describe the translation technique of the translated units. According to Cox LXX Job is unique since “It is not just free or paraphrastic, it is also something of an epitome of the longer and often difficult original. *OG Job is one of a kind in the Septuagint corpus* (my italics — JC). We can typify it as among the least literal, both in its attitude toward abbreviating the parent text and in the way the translator worked with that portion of the text for which we have a translation”⁵. This less faithful translation naturally impedes endeavours to determine whether any given passage should be taken as the Old Greek (OG) text, or whether it should be seen as the work of later

* This article was completed during my research stay at the University of Leiden as guest of Prof. Arie van der Kooij. I discussed various aspects in this contribution with him.

¹ H.M. ORLINSKY, “Studies in the LXX of the Book of Job”, *HUCA* 28 (1957) 53, thinks it is but five-sixth of the MT.

² The terms “literal” and “free” are problematic, however, for the want of more appropriate concepts, I apply them in order to define the free, less faithful and even paraphrastic way these translators rendered their parent texts. See also the proposals by B. LEMMELIJN, “Free and yet faithful: on the translation technique of LXX Exod 7:14-11:10”, *JNSL* 33 (2007) 1-32, regarding definitions in translation technique.

³ C.E. COX, “Job”, *A New English Translation of the Septuagint. A New Translation of the Septuagint and the Other Greek Translations traditionally included under that title*, A. PIETERSMA – B.G. WRIGHT (eds.) (Oxford – London 2007) 667. According to Cox this abbreviation increases as one reads through the book.

⁴ J. COOK, *The Septuagint of Proverbs Jewish and/or Hellenistic Proverbs?* Concerning the Hellenistic Colouring of LXX Proverbs (VTS 69; Leiden 1997) 332.

⁵ Cox, “Job”, 667.

revisors. In the case of Job one can fortunately differentiate between the OG and the later Theodotonic text⁶.

Another significant issue is the relationship between the Greek text and its supposed parent text. In the past some scholars have proposed that Greek Job is based upon an equally shorter Hebrew parent text⁷. However, according to Cox⁸, “on the basis of what we can establish about the translator’s technique, i.e. his rather free, even paraphrastic approach, it seems likely that the shorter text is to be attributed to the time of the translation”. Fernández Marcos⁹ shares the view by Cox. To be sure, Orlinsky¹⁰ is sceptical of ascribing all sorts of wilful changes to the translator. To him stylistic changes were foremost in LXX Job. The discovery of fragments of the Hebrew of Job in the Dead Sea Scrolls has unfortunately not thrown light on this issue¹¹.

Finally, the description “shortened text” does not apply consistently to the Greek version of Job. Even though the text as a whole witnesses to conscious shortening, there are various prominent additions. The major ones are: the diatribe of Job’s wife in 2,9a-e and 42,17a-e¹². This article will deal with one passage from LXX Job, namely Chapter 2,9a-e in order to demonstrate the complexity of the OG version of Job. However, when such passages are approached contextually it is possible to provide appropriate solutions as to their origin.

⁶ J. ZIEGLER, *Septuaginta Vetus Testamentum Graecum*. Auctoritate Scientiarum Gottingensis editum, *Job*, XI.4 (Göttingen 1982) 133. Cf. also A. PIETERSMA, Review of *Job. Septuaginta. Vetus Testamentum Graecum*, 11/4 (ed. J. Ziegler) *JBL* 104 (1985) 305-311.

⁷ COX, “Job”, 667.

⁸ COX, “Job”, 667.

⁹ N. FERNÁNDEZ MARCOS, “The Septuagint reading of the Book of Job”, *The Book of Job*, W.A.M. BEUKEN (ed.) (BETL 114; Leuven 1994) 255.

¹⁰ H.M. ORLINSKY, “The Hebrew and Greek Texts of Job 14.12”, *JQR* 28 (1937) 64: “It is sufficient at this point to indicate that if our translator were so horrified by passages that denied resurrection or that placed God in an unfavourable light that he felt himself compelled to omit about one-sixth of the Book, not only would he not have reproduced in his translation most of the passages throughout the book that denied resurrection (7.7, 9 and 10; 10.21 and 22; 15.22 and 20.7 and 8 and 16.22), but he would most certainly have either deleted or in some way distorted the first stichos in this verse itself”.

¹¹ There are only a few smaller fragments of Job available. See 4QpaleoJobc in P.W. SKEHAN *et al.*, *Qumran Cave 4. IV Palaeo-Hebrew and Greek Biblical Manuscripts* (Oxford 1992) 155-157. Cf. also M. ABEGG *et al.*, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Bible. The Oldest Known Bible Translated for the First Time into English* (San Francisco, CA 1999) 590-593.

¹² This list actually represents two additions. Cf. A.Y. REED, “Job as Jobab: The Interpretation of Job in LXX Job 42:17b-e”, *JBL* 120 (2001) 31.

I. LXX Job 2 — Job's Wife

The second chapter of Job has a different profile from MT. In this case the characteristic of the chapter is that 5 extra strophes have been added in the Greek, the crucial question remaining whether the additions come from the hand of the translator or from some later hand.

1. *The translator's approach*

The unique approach of the translator is observed on two levels:

a) The micro level

This chapter contains 4 *hapax legomena*. The verb ἐκτίνω in verse 5 renders יָנַן.

Three more examples come from the set of additions, namely the verb διανυκτερεύω in 9c and πλανήτις¹³ and λάτρις in 9d. A number of lexemes is used pertinently in the Greek.

The translator seemingly renders freely. The adjective ἄκακος does not appear in Job chapter 1 and is used sparingly in the LXX. Of these three times occur in Job [2,3 (אָרְיָ); 8,20 (אָרְיָ) and 36,5(-)]; once in Ps 24 (25),21; Wis 4,12 and Je 11,19, respectively. It appears 9 times in Proverbs which makes for interesting reading, 1,4 (יָרַע) and 22 (יָרַע); 2,21 (יָרַע); 8,5 (יָרַע); 13,6 (אָרְיָ); 14,15 (יָרַע); 15,10 (*) and 23 (*) and 21,11 (יָרַע). The Hebrew lexeme יָרַע is rendered in various ways in Proverbs 1. In verse 22 ἄκακος is used, but in verse 32 νήπιος is the equivalent. In the other passages in Proverbs the distribution of יָרַע is as follows: 7,7 (ἀφρόνων); 8,5 (ἄκακος); 9,4 (ἄφρων) and 16 (ἄφρων); 14,15 (ἄκακος) and 18 (ἄφρων); 19,25 (ἄφρων); 21,11 (ἄκακος); 22,3 (ἄφρων) and 27,12 (ἄφρων). Three lexemes are thus used as equivalents for יָרַע, with the cluster of lexemes concerning ἄφρων the most frequently used, namely 7 times. Four examples are of ἄκακος, with νήπιος as the apparent exegetical rendering. As stated above the situation is different in Job. The adjective ἄφρων occurs only in Job 2,10; 5,2 and 3; 30,8 and 34,36.

There is a pertinent difference between ἄκακος and ἄφρων in Greek literature. The first denotes the innocent in many contexts. In the LXX, for instance, Job is called an ἄκακος ἀνὴρ. This is even the case in Plato's *Timeaus* 91d where the innocent are described as ἄκακοι ἄνδρες. Philo (*Spec. Leg.*, III, 119) uses this term in connection with innocent children. He also applies a related term, ἀκακία in order to depict the

¹³ This word occurs only in some mss.

state of existence in paradise. The adjective ἄφρων, on the other hand, expresses a more negative nuance in most contexts. The Hebrew lexeme נָכַח (fool) is, *inter alia*, rendered by means of this Greek equivalent in the OT. It is also used to translate אֲנִי־לֵי and אֲנִי־לֵי in both the Pss and Prov.

In Job the connotation of “innocence” for ἄκακος is thus an acceptable one. The important point is that the translator of Job had the freedom to use this term, that has not yet been applied, in order to describe Job’s character.

b) The macro level

The range of added strophes to verse 9 is the most prominent characteristic on the macro level, that is if the translator indeed added these strophes. The same features that are encountered in Job chapter 1, excluding the additions, are found in this chapter too. The same freeness in the application of Greek particles obtain. There are also some creative differences. In this chapter אֲנִי־לֵ in verse 5 is rendered by means of οὐ μὴν δὲ ἀλλὰ, and in chapter 1,11 by means of ἀλλὰ. In the present chapter therefore the translator probably offers a translation for the interjection אֲנִי. The phrase Χρόνου δὲ πολλοῦ προβεβηκότος in verse 9 has no equivalent in the Hebrew and clearly is an attempt by the translator to create literary effect. The same applies to the addition ὁ δὲ ἐμβλέψας (he looked up) in verse 10. It could be that he was looking to heaven for help, or it was just a look of despair! The equivalent of the phrase “they came to him” is missing in the Hebrew of verse 11. It is of the same order as the additions in Job 1, for example the addition *that happened to him* in verse 22. This addition had the intention to fill in “missing” passages and is different from the addition to verse 9. However, in the final analysis it is added for literary effect.

2. The additions

The same intentional tendencies by the translator located in Job chapter 1 occur in this chapter too. The additions in verse 9 are logically significant in this regard. They are an intended endeavour by the translator, or a later revisor, to question the steadfastness of Job. To the “unbeliever” it is simply natural that clinging to the Lord under such dire circumstances, is foolish. Job’s answer is to the contrary.

Again there are some explicative phrases added for literary effect. The italicised words in verses 9 (*Then after a long time had passed*) and 10 (*But Job looked up*) are applicable examples. And again the translator uses intra-textual readings by relating chapters 2 and 1. He also exhibits a free hand in this regard, as seen in verses 2, 3 and 6. The additions to verse 9 are the most significant and need some more attention.

a) Verse 9

וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ אִשְׁתּוֹ עַד מָתַי תִּבְרַח בְּרַח אֱלֹהִים וּמָתָה¹⁴

9. Then his wife said to him, “Do you still persist in your integrity? Curse God, and die”.

Χρόνου δὲ πολλοῦ προβεβηκότος εἶπεν αὐτῇ ἡ γυνὴ αὐτοῦ
Μέχρι τίνος καρτερήσεις λέγων

9. Then after a long time had passed, his wife said to him, “How long will you persist and say”

There are three prominent differences between MT and LXX. Firstly, as stated already, the phrase Χρόνου δὲ πολλοῦ προβεβηκότος has no equivalent in the Hebrew. I think it is an endeavour by the translator to create the literary effect that time elapsed before the wife reacted. This leaves the impression that Job’s wife contemplated her reactions.

Secondly, it is striking that בְּרַח אֱלֹהִים is not translated in verse 9. As a matter of fact MT has corresponding phrases in verses 3 and 9 that are approached differently by the Greek translator. MT verse 3 reads וַיִּבְרַח מִן־הַמָּוֶלֶת “He still persists in his integrity”, LXX has εἶπεν δὲ ὁ κύριος πρὸς τὸν διάβολον Προσέχες οὖν τῷ θεράποντί μου Ἰωβ, ὅτι οὐκ ἔστιν κατ’ αὐτὸν τῶν ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς ἄνθρωπος ἄκακος, ἀληθινός, ἄμεμπτος, θεοσεβής, ἀπεχόμενος ἀπὸ παντὸς κακοῦ; ἔτι δὲ ἔχεται ἀκακίας, σὺ δὲ εἶπας τὰ ὑπάρχοντα αὐτοῦ διὰ κενῆς ἀπολέσαι.

Then the Lord said, “So did you notice my attendant Job — that there is no one of those on earth like him, an innocent, genuine, blameless, religious man, staying away from all wrong, *And he still maintains his innocence*, though you said to destroy all his possessions for no reason”.

For the related phrase וַיִּבְרַח מִן־הַמָּוֶלֶת “Do you still persist in your integrity?”, in verse 9 LXX has Μέχρι τίνος καρτερήσεις λέγων “How long will you persist and say?”

The translator thus renders two relatively similar Hebrew phrases differently. The difference between the Hebrew phrases is that different persons are referred to; 2nd person sg you/your in verse 9 and the 3rd person sg “he/his” in verse 3. The Greek corresponds as far as this aspect is concerned in both verses. However, the translator interpreted the phrase בְּרַח אֱלֹהִים. In the first case it is translated by means of ἀκακία “innocence”. This noun occurs in Job 2,3; 27,5; 31,6 and 36,10 and 7 times in the Psalms, always in connection with צד. The Hebrew root is used in Job 1,1 (ἀληθινός) and 8 (ἄμεμπτος); 2,3 (ἄκακος); 9,20 (ἄμεμπτος) and 21 (ἡσέβησα?), as well as is 4,6 (ἀκακία) and 21,23 (Theodotion). The translation of verse 9 is therefore seemingly an endeavour by the translator to stress the immoral attitude of Job’s wife.

¹⁴ For the Hebrew and Greek versions I used the *Libronix Library* texts. The translation of the Hebrew is the NRSV and that of the Greek NETS.

¹⁰⁰ Heb *Bless*.

She does not think Job's position is relevant, nor does she seem to understand this position. This is, thirdly, underlined by the statement "how long will you persist". The fact that the verb καρτερέω is used only this one time in Job is an indication that it is indeed an interpretation by the translator. It occurs only 11 times in the LXX and not at all in Proverbs. The Greek version clearly is an endeavour to picture Job's wife as an unbeliever.

9aa Ἴδου ἀναμένω χρόνον ἔτι μικρὸν
προσδεχόμενος τὴν ἐλπίδα τῆς σωτηρίας μου

9a "Look, I will hang on a little longer, while I wait for the hope of my deliverance?"

The verb ἀναμένω is used sparingly (10x) in the LXX; only twice in Job 2,9 and 7,2. The verb προσδέχομαι is used 5 times in Job [2,9 (2x); 29,23 (2x) and 33,20], always without a relationship with a Semitic parent text. It appears only once in Proverbs. There are 13 occurrences of ἐλπίς in Job, practically always in connection with תְּקִיָּה. It is thus a well-known lexeme to the translator. The noun σωτηρία appears in Job 2,9 (-); 5,4 (שׁוּׁ); 11,20 (+); 13,16 (שׁוּׁ); 20,20 (יִשְׁׁ); 30,15 (שׁוּׁ) and 22 (+ and תְּקִיָּה) and is thus also a familiar term to the translator.

9ba ἰδοὺ γὰρ ἡφάνισται σου τὸ μνημόσυνον ἀπὸ τῆς γῆς
υἱοὶ καὶ θυγατέρες, ἐμῆς κοιλίας ὠδίνες καὶ πόνοι,
οὓς εἰς τὸ κενὸν ἐκοπίασα μετὰ μόχθων

9b For look, your legacy has vanished from the earth — sons and daughters, my womb's birth pangs and labours, for whom I wearied myself with hardships in vain.

The verb ἀφανίζω occurs in Job 2,9; 4,9; 22,20 and 39,24. μνημόσυνον is used only twice in Job, the other example being 18,17. κοιλία occurs 9 times in Job. The noun ὠδίν is used 5 times in Job. πόνος occurs 7 times in Job and 6 times in Proverbs respectively. The adjective κενός appears 22 times in Job. The verb κοπιάω occurs three times in Job. The noun μόχθος appears only in these pluses in Job and not at all in Proverbs.

9ca σύ τε αὐτὸς ἐν σαπρίᾳ σκολήκων κάθησαι διανυκτερεύων αἰθριος,

9c And you? You sit in the refuse of worms as you spend the night in the open air.

The und σαπρία is used primarily in Job, namely in 2,9; 7,5; 8,16; 17,14; 21,26 and 25,6. The noun σκόληξ occurs in Job 2,9; 7,5 and 25,6. The verb κάττει appears 5 times in Job. The verb διανυκτερεύω is a *hapax legomenon*. The adjective αἰθριος is used only once in Job and 10 times in the LXX as a whole.

9da καὶ γὰρ πλανῆτις καὶ λάτρις
τόπον ἐκ τόπου περιερχομένη καὶ οἰκίαν ἐξ οἰκίας

προσδεχομένη τὸν ἥλιον πότε δύσεται,
 ἵνα ἀναπαύσωμαι τῶν μόχθων καὶ τῶν ὀδυνῶν,
 αἷ με νῦν συνέχουσιν.

9d As for me, I am one that wanders about and a hired servant — from place to place and house to house, waiting for when the sun will set, so I can rest from the distresses and griefs that now beset me.

The words *πλανῆτις* and *λάτρις* are *hapax legomena*. *πλανῆτις* appears in many LXX manuscripts but is not taken by Ziegler as OG¹⁵. Rahlfs does have it as OG. This noun does not appear in the papyri, but it occurs in Lycophron of Chalcis in Euboea who wrote his comedy *Alexandra*, circa the 4-3 century BCE.

According to Muraoka (GLS) *λάτρις* has the nuance of “handmaid” in its semantic fields. It appears abundantly in the classical Greek authors such as Euripides and Sophocles, but not in the papyri. The important point in this regard is that the wife of Job is describing herself as a servant, after she used to be an important lady of the house. There are various Greek words that could have been used in this regard. The noun *δούλη*, for one, does not appear in the OG of Job. Interestingly enough, *δοῦλος*, the male equivalent “male slave” is used abundantly in the LXX, but only once in Job, namely in 40,28. Other lexemes for a woman-slave are *οικέτις* that appears only in Ex 21,7; Le 19,20 and Prov 30,23. The noun *Παιδίσκη* also is used in the LXX, but not in OG Job.

9ea ἄλλὰ εἶπόν τι ῥῆμα εἰς κύριον καὶ τελεύτα
 Now say some word to the Lord and die!”

There are significant differences between MT and LXX in this chapter. Firstly, the five strophes of additions have no equivalent elsewhere. Clearly the person(s) responsible for this phrase intended to leave the impression that Job’s wife contemplated her reactions and pictures her as an unsympathetic person, one who has no understanding of Job’s reverent position. Secondly, the translator/revisor did not provide a translation for the phrase *וַיִּקְרָא בְּיָדָיו* in verse 9, but in the final addition e. Finally, the Greek seemingly avoids referring to “cursing God”, hence *וַיִּקְרָא* is translated by means of *εἶπον*.

It is crucial to determine whether these additions are indeed the result of the translator, or of a differing Semitic parent text. It is also, theoretically at least, possible that a later revisor added these strophes. One way of determining the origin of the additions is to analyse the individual lexemes. If they are found in the rest of Job one can naturally expect them to be the handiwork of the translator¹⁶. From the above

¹⁵ According to Ziegler B and S* read *πλανωμένη*. He also chose this reading as OG.

¹⁶ For this reason I analyse individual lexemes in Job.

analysis it is clear that by far the largest number of lexemes in these additions are well-known to the translator. The picture is, nevertheless, diverse. There are three *hapax legomena*; διανυκτερεύω in verse 9c and πλανῆτις, λάτρις (verse 9d).

Some lexemes are used sparingly, eg. the verbs προβαίνω and καρτερέω (verse 9) are used only once in Job. These examples are strictly speaking not part of the additions, however, the translator does not distinguish dichotomically between the OG of verse 9 and the additions. μνημόσυνον (9b) is used only twice in Job. The verb κοπιάω (9b) occurs three times in Job and the noun μόχθος appears only in these pluses in Job. The adjective αἰθριος (9c) is used only once in Job. The verb δύω (9d) also occurs once only in Job.

From this analysis it would therefore be possible to conclude that the additions come from the hand of the translator. By far most of the lexemes used in the additions are common to the book of Job. Needless to say this argument can not be decisive. A second option is to search for external material. There are, unfortunately, no extant Hebrew evidence of these additions. There are some lexemes, such as πλανῆτις and λάτρις that appear in Greek classical literature, but this is not different from the normal pattern eg. in LXX Proverbs. A third avenue is to take a closer look at the structure of the additions. Of crucial significance in this regard is the fact that a translation for the phrase אֱלֹהִים בְּרַךְ וְנָתַן is not provided in verse 9 in connection with the Hebrew text. It is done only in the final addition e. This means that these additions were most probably introduced by the translator himself. If a later hand was responsible for these additions one would naturally expect the added strophes to be, so to say, “hooked onto, added to” the text. However, in this instance the additions were interwoven into the existing text, seemingly by the translator himself.

It is of course theoretically possible that a later revisor added these lines. If this was indeed the case, then he should have been familiar with the Greek text of Job. This is indeed the view of Fernández Marcos¹⁷. He thinks these additions are a midrashic expansion introduced by a later hand. In his view this lament could represent the point of departure for the testament of Job, where the role of the wife of Job is amplified¹⁸. Heater is also of the opinion that the translator is responsible for this addition¹⁹. To him “The occurrence of eight words in this addition not appearing elsewhere in Job seems to point to a later hand than that of the

¹⁷ Ibid., 257.

¹⁸ Cf. P.W. VAN DER HORST, “Images of Women in the Testament of Job”, *Studies on the Testament of Job*, M.A. KNIBB – P.W. VAN DER HORST (eds.) (SNTS MS 66; Cambridge 1989) 93-117. See also M.C. LEGASPI, “Job’s wives in the *Testament of Job*: A note on the Synthesis of Two traditions”, *JBL* 127 (2008) 71-79.

¹⁹ H. HEATER, *A Septuagint Translation Technique in the Book of Job* (CBQMS 11; Washington, DC 1982) 35-36.

translator”²⁰. Some of the *hapax legomena* mentioned above are indeed part of these words and can not with ease be taken as unknown to the translator. This issue can thus not be decisive. Therefore, in the light of my above argument, I am inclined to argue these additions come from the hand of the translator.

Finally, it is necessary to analyse the content of these additions. They seem to be an endeavour to explain some of the dilemmas which Job’s wife was experiencing. This ties in nicely with the tendency of the translator, located in Job 1, to stress the integrity of Job. The translator clearly antecipates questions against the steadfastness of Job in order to strengthen his description of the strength of character. These additions are hence of a different order than those located in chapter 42.

There are more prominent differences between the Hebrew and the OG in this chapter. One significant example is the fact that the three friends of Job are actually called kings in verse 11: “Now when his three friends heard of all the troubles that had come upon him, they came to him, each one from his own country — Eliphaz, the *king* of the Thaimanites, Baldad, the *tyrant* of the Sauchites, Sophar, the *king* of the Minites. And they came to him of one accord, to comfort and to visit with him”. This ties in with the description that Job was an important person to God in Chapter 1. This can, however, not be discussed in the present context. It needs to be done in conjunction with Job 42²¹ where these friends are also called kings. However, this depiction naturally makes Job an important person. This is underlined by the way he is described by the translator. In Chapter 1, on the one hand, he is called a *παῖς*. The noun *παῖς* occurs in Job 1,8. 15. 17; 4,18, 29,5 and 42,8. On the other hand, Job is also called a *θεράπων*. This is true for 1,8 (in A); 3,19; 7,2; 19,15 and 16; 31,13 and 42,7. 8 (3x). In the LXX this lexeme practically always translates the noun עֲבָדָה. Concerning the Pentateuch Van der Kooij²² has argued that *θεράπων* refers to “particular servants of a king” a “confidential attendant”. It is clear from the opening two chapters that Job is not an ordinary servant of the Lord, but a confidant!

* *

*

The Greek version of Job has a unique profile compared to MT and other textual witnesses. In by far most of the instances these differences

²⁰ Ibid., 35-36.

²¹ Cf. REED, “Job as Jobab”, 31-55.

²² A. VAN DER KOOIJ, “Servant or Slave? The Various Equivalents of Hebrew ‘Ebed in the Septuagint of the Pentateuch”, *XIII Congress of the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies Ljubljana 2007* (ed. M.K.H. PETERS) (SCS 55; Atlanta, GA 2008) 228.

reflect a shortened, abbreviated text. However, Job 2,9a-e is an exception, it represents an addition of five strophes. Based on a contextual analysis this addition should be taken as the OG text. The above analysis indicates that the translator did not add the additions paratactically, but in fact wove them into the parent text as it were. A later revisor would probably simply have added these additions. Moreover, most of the lexemes used in the additions were known to the translation.

Department of Ancient Studies
University of Stellenbosch
Private Bag XI, 7602 Matieland, South Africa

Johann COOK

SUMMARY

The LXX version of Job is described as an abbreviated, shortened text. However, it does contain two prominent additions in Job 2,9a-e and 42,17b-e. As far as the first is concerned this article argues that it is not the result of a later hand, nor of a differing Hebrew parent text. Based on a contextual analysis combined with an analysis of lexical items found in the additions, it reaches the conclusion that the translator of the Old Greek in fact is the work of the original translator.

RECENSIONES

Vetus Testamentum

- J. Todd HIBBARD, *Intertextuality in Isaiah 24-27*. The Reuse and Evocation of Earlier Texts and Traditions (Forschungen zum Alten Testament, 2. Reihe 16). Tübingen, Mohr Siebeck, 2006. ix-248 p. 15,5 × 23

Diese Arbeit stellt die überarbeitete Fassung einer Dissertation aus dem Jahre 2003 dar, die unter der Leitung von Joseph Blenkinsopp an der Notre-Dame-Universität angefertigt und angenommen wurde. Sie ist in sechs Teilen aufgebaut, dem Einleitungskapitel (1-36), vier Kapiteln zur Intertextualität der Abschnitte Jes 24,1-20 (37-69), Jes 24,21-25,12 (70-118), Jes 26,1-27,1 (119-167), Jes 27,2-13 (168-209) und der Konklusion (210-218). Die Sprache ist klar und unprätentiös, Einleitungsfragen werden in genügender Breite dargestellt und die Drucklegung lässt wenig zu wünschen übrig, außer kleineren Tippfehlern und störenden Umstellungen hebräischer Worte bei Zeilenumbrüchen.

Im Einleitungskapitel wird die Forschungsgeschichte, sowohl methodisch als auch inhaltlich auf Jes 24-27 bezogen, präsentiert. Die Untersuchungsfrage ist durch den Untertitel klar umrissen: wie werden in Jes 24-27 ältere Texte und Traditionen wieder verwendet und aufgerufen. Die damit zusammenhängenden methodologischen und inhaltlichen Probleme werden im Einleitungskapitel angerissen: gibt es eindeutige Kriterien, um eine Textpassage als "Intertext" zu bewerten? Wie verläuft die Aneignung des älteren Textes im jüngeren und was ist der Mehrwert an Bedeutung in jedem einzelnen Fall? Der Standpunkt von Hibbard kann als gelungen konservativ gelten, wenn er an der diachronen Einordnung der Texte festhält, wie diskutabel diese im Einzelfall auch sein mögen. Für seine Art der Intertextualität ist die diachrone Abfolge notwendige Bedingung für die Rezeption der älteren durch jüngere Texte. Der mögliche Intertext aus Jes 24-27 muss zu einem *älteren Text* außerhalb dieses Textbereiches (inklusive außerbiblischer, altorientalischer Texte und Traditionen) in Beziehung stehen. Dass auch andere Bezüge beobachtet werden können, die dem Entstehungsprozess gegenläufig sind, wird nicht negiert, aber gilt für diese Untersuchung als irrelevant. Nicht, wie Leserinnen und Leser heute Texte zueinander in Beziehung setzen, ist von Bedeutung, sondern wie im biblischen Israel neue Texte aus der Wiederverwendung vorliegender Texte und Traditionen entstanden sind. Dieser Ansatz ist historisch sehr plausibel,

denn man muss doch weiterhin von der Vermutung ausgehen, dass nur zahlenmäßig kleine Gruppen im nachexilischen Jerusalem des Lesens und Schreibens ausgefeilter literarischer Texte mächtig waren, zumal der Besitz und die Sammlung schriftlicher Traditionen wohl nur in der Nähe des Tempelbetriebes möglich war.

Einige Kriterien von Intertextualität werden in der Einleitung genannt: so liegt umso klarer ein Intertext vor, desto seltener das gemeinsame Vokabular ist und desto evidenter eine thematische Kohärenz beider Texte vorliegt. Zudem muss die intertextuelle Beziehung einen nachweisbaren Mehrwert haben, also pragmatisch von Bedeutung sein (5). Auf dem Hintergrund des gewählten Ansatzes ist der Überblick über die literaturwissenschaftliche Diskussion zur Intertextualität (u.a. Kristeva, Barthes, Lévi-Strauss, Genette, Bloom) gut gebündelt, ein wenig ausführlicher fällt die Übersicht zu den bereits vorgelegten Versuchen in der Bibelwissenschaft aus, intertextuellen Beziehungsgeflechten anhand konkreter Texte nachzugehen (u.a. Miscall, Fishbane, Sommer, Willey, Nogalski, Polaski). Eine deutlichere Abgrenzung zur fast gleich lautenden Arbeit von D.C. Polaski, *Authorizing an End. The Isaiah Apocalypse and Intertextuality* (Biblical Interpretation 50; Leiden 2001) wäre angebracht gewesen, denn die Differenz in Einzelfragen wie z.B. zu Jes 24,5 ("ewiger Bund") macht die grundsätzliche Neubearbeitung der intertextuellen Bezüge in diesem Textbestand noch nicht hinreichend deutlich, zumal die geschichtliche Orientierung beiden Arbeiten gemeinsam ist (19-20).

Überraschenderweise beginnt der Forschungsüberblick zu den exegetischen Arbeiten zu Jes 24-27 insgesamt mit der Frage nach der Identität der Stadt (Jes 24,10.12; 25,2; 26,1.5; 27,10), ob sich dahinter Babylon, Jerusalem, Dibon, Samaria, Rom, Karthago und/oder die Kombination mehrerer Städte verbirgt bzw. eine metaphorische Deutung nahe liegt. Danach folgen Hinweise zur Gattungs- und Formkritik sowie zur Struktur und Redaktion dieser Kapitel im Laufe der Auslegungsgeschichte. Eine grundsätzliche Aufarbeitung der Frage, ob und wenn ja, wie diese Kapitel im Gesamt des Jesajabuches – zumindest als Klimax der Völkerspruchsammlung in Jes 13-23 – auszulegen sind, wird nicht geboten (vgl. dazu U. Berges, *Das Buch Jesaja. Komposition und Endgestalt* (Herders Biblische Studien 16; Freiburg i.Br. 1998) 139-198; jetzt aufgenommen in W.A.M. Beuken, *Jesaja 13-27* (HTKAT, Freiburg i.Br. 2007) 310-314. Für eine historisch-diachron angelegte Arbeit zur Intertextualität von Jes 24-27, die davon ausgeht, dass diese Kapitel ab dem späten sechsten bis zum frühen vierten Jahrhundert verfasst worden sind (36), hätte es nahe gelegen, die redaktions- und kompositionskritischen Fragen vorab darzustellen und eine verantwortete eigene Position einzunehmen. Wenn diese Kapitel einen Dialog mit Jes 56-66 führen (36) – was durchaus denkbar

ist —, warum stehen sie dann nicht hinter diesen Schlusskapiteln des Jesajabuches, sondern hinter der Völkerspruchsammlung?

Im Rahmen einer Rezension ist es nicht möglich, alle exegetischen Detailergebnisse dieser Arbeit zu präsentieren und zu würdigen. Einige Ergebnisse müssen genügen: so ergeben sich intertextuelle Bezüge von Jes 24,1-20 besonders zu Hos 4; Jer 48; Am 5; Jes 17 und 21, sowie zu einigen Passagen aus Gen 1-11. Dabei zeigt sich generell ein Zug der Universalisierung, d.h. der Pragmatik der Kap 24-27 entsprechend werden Motive aus der engeren Sichtweise der Spendertexte auf die Weltebene erweitert. So gilt das Leerschlagen des Ölbaumes nicht mehr Israel (Jes 17,6), sondern der Völkerwelt insgesamt (Jes 24,13). Das Gericht, das am Nordreich vollzogen wurde (Am 5,2), wird jetzt die ganze Welt treffen (Jes 24,20b): sie wird fallen und nicht wieder aufstehen! Besonders interessant sind die Bezüge zur Urgeschichte, wobei für Jes 24,1-20 die Motive der geöffneten Himmelsfenster (Jes 24,28c; Gen 7,11; 8,2), der *berit 'olam* (Jes 24,5; Gen 9,16) und der Zerstreuung (Jes 24,1; Gen 11,1-9) im Mittelpunkt stehen. Die kurz angerissene Diskussion zur Datierung der J- und P- Texte und der vorge-schlagenen Abhängigkeitsverhältnisse trägt für diese Arbeit wenig aus, denn es dürfte doch in der Jesajabuch-Exegese großer Konsens darüber herrschen, dass Jes 24-27 frühestens um 450 v. Chr. anzusetzen sind, also als Rezipient von und nicht als Spender für Gen 1-11 in Frage kommt. Der Ansicht, der Ausdruck "ewiger Bund" in Jes 24,5 verweise auf den Noah-Bund in Gen 9 – und nicht in erster Linie auf den Moses- oder den David-Bund –, kann mit guten Gründen gefolgt werden. Doch stellt sich anschließend die Frage, was dieser Rückbezug auf Noah konkret für die Pragmatik von Jes 24ff bedeutet, zumal es ja um den *gebrochenen* ewigen Bund geht, was den Leser von vornherein zum Nachdenken anregt. In welcher Weise haben sich die Autoren/hat sich der Autor von Jes 24 den Bruch eines ewigen bzw. ewig alten Bundes vorgestellt? Darüber schweigt sich die Arbeit leider aus und der Rückgriff auf Gunkels "Endzeit gleich Urzeit" bleibt zu unspezifisch, um die intertextuelle Zielsetzung bei allem hypothetischen Vorbehalt wenigstens ansatzweise zu umreißen. Die Verbindung zu Jes 26,21 ist hier hilfreich, denn dort bricht JHWH von seiner Stätte auf, um die Schuld der Erdenbewohner zu ahnden, die darin besteht, das Blut von Unschuldigen vergossen zu haben, d.h. Kapitalverbrechen verübt zu haben (vgl. Berges, *Jesaja*, 182-186). Danach wäre das Brechen des ewigen Bundes durch die Erdenbewohner eben die Übertretung des schöpfungsgemäßen und auch nach der Sintflut nicht aufgehobenen Tötungsverbotes von Menschen untereinander. Jede Tötung eines Menschen ist und bleibt immer eine Tat, durch die der ewige Bund mit Noah gebrochen wird, ein Vergehen, das JHWH in der Endzeit ahnden wird! In der Diskussion zu

Jes 26,21 verweist der Autor explizit auf Jes 24 und den dortigen Noah-Kontext (162-167), ohne daraus jedoch klar umrissene inhaltliche Konsequenzen zu ziehen.

Sehr gelungen ist das Kapitel zur Intertextualität von Jes 27,2-13, ein Text, der nicht nur die Kap 24–27, sondern die Völkerspruchsammlung in Jes 13–27 insgesamt beschließt. Die Vegetationsbilder des Weinbergs (Vv. 2-6), des Früchte Hervorbringens (V. 9) und des Ähren Ausklopfens (V. 12) binden Jes 27 als kompositorische Einheit zusammen. Das Lied über den Weinberg (Vv. 2-6) kann durch die klare Aufnahme des Weinbergliedes aus Jes 5,1-7 als das deutlichste Beispiel einer innerbiblischen Neuverwertung vorliegenden Materials in Jes 24–27 gelten. Nicht die Tatsache als solche, sondern der Aussagegehalt und die Zielrichtung dieser Re-Interpretation stehen zur Diskussion. Die neuen Verse zum Weinberg bilden nicht einfach ein positives Gegenstück zum Lied in Jes 5, sondern die Metapher "Israel als Weinberg" kann jetzt beides bedeuten: sowohl Gottes Gericht an seinem Volk als auch sein Angebot zur Rettung. Während in Jes 5 das schlechte Ergebnis Faktum ist, bleibt das Gericht in Jes 27 eine reelle Möglichkeit, aber die Hoffnung auf einen guten Ausgang der Geschichte JHWH mit seinem Volk überwiegt (V. 6).

Die Dialektik von bereits ergangenem Gericht und möglicherweise noch ausstehender Bestrafung bestimmt die anschließenden Verse 27,7-13. Das göttliche Gericht an den Völkern hat auch sein eigenes Volk mit eingeschlossen, aber nicht vernichtend, sondern auf eine solche Weise, dass es "post exilium" von Fremdgötterei und Bilderkult gereinigt wird (Vv. 7-9). Der Völkerspruch gegen Damaskus und das Nordreich in Jes 17,1-11 steht zwar als Spendertext hinter Jes 27,7-9, aber das ist nicht Beweis genug, die feste Stadt, die verlassen und verödet werde, sei Samaria (Jes 27,10-11). Es handelt sich dagegen um eine Wiederverwendung der Gerichtsvorstellung gegen das Nordreich aus Jes 17 auf das nachexilische Israel insgesamt, speziell für die Jerusalemer Hörerschaft bestimmt (199). Die abschließenden zwei Verse zur Sammlung der Diasporajuden (Jes 27,12-13) hat sein Pendant in den ebenfalls eine Teilkomposition beschließenden Versen 11,10-16. Während jedoch dort die national-politische Einheit unter erhoffter davidischer Ägide im Mittelpunkt steht, ist Jes 27,12-13 eher kultisch-religiös ausgerichtet (207). Insgesamt gilt, dass sich die intertextuellen Bezüge in Jes 27 zusehends auf das Jesajabuch selbst konzentrieren, was weitere Rückschlüsse auf die Redaktions- und Kompositionsarbeit am Gesamtbuch eröffnen könnte. In der Konklusion wird auf diese Möglichkeit nur hingewiesen, ohne weitere Überlegungen vorzulegen. Die vorgelegte Arbeit macht auf einsichtige Weise deutlich, dass es sich bei Jes 24–27 um eine nachexilische Prophetie handelt, die je länger desto stärker bereits vorliegende Traditionen fortschreibt, wobei vier Elemente dominieren: Universalisierung des Gerichts, Universalisierung des Heiles, Reak-

tion auf unerfüllte Prophetien und Beiträge zum thematischen Diskurs im Jesajabuch selbst (216).

Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität Münster
Seminar für Zeit- und Religionsgeschichte
des Alten Testaments
Johannisstrasse 8-10
D- 48149 Münster

Ulrich BERGES

Mark GRAY, *Rhetoric and Social Justice in Isaiah* (Library of Hebrew/Old Testament Studies 432). New York-London, T&T Clark, 2006. x-306 p. 15,5 × 23,5

El ensayo analiza, mediante la utilización del método retórico, el tema de la justicia social en el libro de Isaías. El autor sostiene que el decurso literario del texto isaiano radicaliza y universaliza progresivamente la exigencia de la justicia social (Is 1,16-17; 58,6-10), a la vez que muestra cómo la ambigüedad de la imagen divina, latente en el texto isaiano, constituye el acicate que impulsa al ser humano a perseguir la instauración plena y universal de la justicia social.

A lo largo de la Introducción (The Book of Isaiah: A text-Based Method for a Literary Reading, 1-18), Gray señala el contenido, el enfoque y la metodología del estudio sobre la justicia social en el libro de Isaías. Focaliza el texto isainiano desde la perspectiva canónica. Adopta el método retórico como premisa del enfoque teológico de los textos y, anclado en el postestructuralismo, recoge el planteamiento deconstructivista (Derrida) para perfilar la perspectiva retórica. El autor señala también la decisión de recoger el sentido irónico de los textos, enfatiza la contingencia de toda interpretación, y sitúa las conclusiones de su estudio en el marco de la teología de la liberación desde la óptica misionológica.

En el capítulo primero (From Failed Rhetoric to the Hope of Justice: Isaiah 1:16-17 to Isaiah 58 - A trajectory, 19-71) Gray, tras confrontar la noción de justicia con otros autores (Knieron, Heschel, Frey, Duchrow, Nürnberger), expone que sólo puede hablarse de justicia social cuando queden satisfechas las condiciones de subsistencia de todo ser humano, y cuando se alcanza la participación de todos los estamentos en el desarrollo de la realidad social; de ahí deduce que el papel de los pobres en el establecimiento de la justicia social no se reduce a la recepción de las dádivas de los ricos, sino en su participación en la constitución de una sociedad justa.

Desde esta perspectiva hermenéutica, el autor aborda el libro de Isaías desde la perspectiva global: contempla Is 1 como prólogo y percibe en Is 65-66 el epílogo. El examen de Is 1,16-17 impele al autor a discernir tras la

cuestión de la justicia social el nervio ético del libro de Isaías. Gray analiza el concepto de justicia social que aparece en Is 1,16-17 para confrontarlo después con el planteamiento ofrecido por Is 58,6-10. El contenido de Is 1,16-17 concibe la implantación de la justicia social cuando los pudientes practican la caridad con los oprimidos, huérfanos y viudas; como destaca el autor, la noción de justicia social que se deriva de Is 1,16-17 se orienta hacia la celebración del culto digno. Según Gray, la insuficiencia de la noción de justicia, tal como figura en Is 1,16-17, nace de la percepción sapiencial de la justicia que adopta en este punto el texto isaiano. Isaías, cómo señala Gray, sitúa la injusticia en la opción de los pudientes que, alejados de la pobreza, viven anclados en los consejos sapienciales. Dichos consejos les impiden abordar la reforma profunda que implica la implantación de la justicia social. Atento a la noción de la justicia expresada en Is 1,16-17 el autor aborda el análisis de Is 58, donde percibe en la solidaridad con el oprimido, y no en la caridad mal entendida, la senda que conduce a la vivencia de la justicia. El comentarista discierne en Is 58 una radicalización y una proyección escatológica y universalista de la noción de justicia social que aparece en Is 1,16-17.

Desde la perspectiva que acabamos de mentar, Grey ahonda a lo largo del segundo capítulo (*The Depth and Dimensions of Social Justice in Isaiah 58:6-10: Solidarity, Self-Giving, and the Embrace of Pain*, 72-117), en el contenido de Is 58,6-10. Según el autor, Is 58 constituye un texto dirigido a una comunidad transida por la discordia pero que, a pesar de las adversidades, persigue la implantación de la justicia social para todos. La situación comunitaria nace del divorcio que existe entre la práctica religiosa y la vivencia de la justicia; por eso el contenido de Is 58,6-10 se dirige, según el autor, a quienes buscan la instauración de la justicia y desean la reconciliación comunitaria. El centro del poema se halla en Is 58,9^a sobre el que pivota toda la perícopa (Is 58,6-10); la presencia de Dios en el seno comunitario (“Aquí estoy”: Is 58,9a) procederá sólo de la vivencia de la justicia entendida bajo la categoría de liberación y no desde el cariz caritativo que suponía Is 1,16-17. Según Gray Is 58,6-10, aunque pertenezca a una corriente teológica minoritaria, ocupa un puesto crucial en el libro de Isaías por lo que concierne a la temática de la justicia social. Mientras Is 1,16-17 insistía, desde la corriente sapiencial, en el desprendimiento de los ricos a favor de los pobres, Is 58,6-10 enfatiza la exigencia de la solidaridad y subraya la necesaria lucha por la justicia no sólo a favor de Israel sino en beneficio de la humanidad entera.

El análisis de Is 58,6-10 ha radicalizado el concepto de justicia social presente en Is 1,16-17 a la vez que ha universalizado el compromiso humano a favor de la justicia. Ahora el tercer capítulo (*The Rethoric of Punishment as Questioning Voice*, 118-178) aborda el tema de la justicia dirigida específicamente a los pobres, viudas, y huérfanos, con la intención

de mostrar al lector, mediante la aplicación del método retórico, la ambigüedad con que el texto presenta la figura de Dios. Mientras Is 9,16 afirma: “El Señor no se apiada de los jóvenes, ni se compadece de los huérfanos y las viudas, porque todos son malvados y perversos y de sus labios sólo salen infamias”, el mensaje de Is 1,16-17 enfatiza el mandato divino: “buscad el derecho, protegéd al oprimido, socorred al huérfano, defended a la viuda”. El autor distingue una contradicción entre el contenido de Is 1,16-17 e Is 9,16 respecto de las viudas y los huérfanos. Gray muestra, de modo puntilloso, el modo en que los comentaristas han abordado la contradicción, y después se adentra, mediante un detallado análisis del contenido teológico y sintáctico, en mostrar cómo puede resolverse la cuestión de la contradicción entre Is 1,16-17 e Is 9,16. El autor se centra en el método retórico para mostrar, desde la ironía, el rostro diverso de la naturaleza de Dios que aparece entre Is 1,16-17 e Is 9,16. Concluye afirmando que la ambigüedad del rostro de Dios en cuanto a la exigencia de la justicia no persigue la confusión del lector, sino que subraya la ambigüedad de la naturaleza divina para enfatizar la radical trascendencia de la divinidad respecto a la intelección humana.

Con la intención de perfilar la noción de la ambigüedad divina, el autor analiza a lo largo del cuarto capítulo el tema de la confianza (*The Matter of Trust: “On What are You Basing this Trust of Yours?”*, 179-234). La profecía isaiana, según Gray, recalca la desconfianza intrínseca que inspira el ser humano: “No confiéis más en el hombre, cuya vida es apenas un soplo sin valor” (Is 2,22). El autor ahonda en el significado de Is 2,22 analizando los discursos de los amigos de Job y el diálogo entre la corte de Ezequías y los enviados de Senaquerib; del análisis retórico el autor deduce que no sólo el hombre es indigno de confianza (Is 2,22) sino que también se pone en duda, desde la perspectiva retórica, la decisión divina de intervenir a favor del ser humano. El tema de la desconfianza, referido a la naturaleza divina, figura, entre otros lugares, en la diversa perspectiva que ofrece Is 40-55 e Is 56-66: mientras Is 40-55 conmina al pueblo a confiar en las promesas divinas, el contenido de Is 56-66 explica al lector la razón por la que no se han cumplido las promesas divinas expuestas en Is 40-55. Gray enumera también algunos pasajes que reflejan “el rostro oscuro de Dios”: la creación de la tiniebla (Is 45,7), la excesiva dureza de la sanción divina (Is 40,2), la ocasión en que Dios abandonó a su pueblo (Is 54,7). Mediante la aplicación del método retórico, Gray analiza la cuestión de la desconfianza que se deriva del comportamiento divino y el desconcierto que provoca el “rostro oculto de Dios”; según el autor ambas cuestiones no persiguen abocar al lector a la sima del desconcierto, sino que constituyen el acicate que impulsa a los israelitas a buscar por sí mismos la implantación de la justicia social, no sólo en Israel sino en el seno de la humanidad entera.

En el seno de la conclusión final (*The Primacy of Justice*, 235-265) Gray recalca la primacía del tema de la justicia en la obra isaiana, recuerda la progresiva radicalización del asunto de la justicia social (Is 1,16-17; 58,6-10), e insiste en la fuerza de los textos que, como hemos expuesto, impelen al ser humano a implantar la justicia social en el seno de todos los pueblos. La obra concluye con elenco bibliográfico extenso, el índice de referencias bíblicas y el índice de autores citados.

El libro constituye un estudio erudito y sugerente del tema de la justicia social en el libro de Isaías; aun así debemos hacer algunas observaciones. Gray contrasta ampliamente sus opiniones con el criterio de otros comentaristas (Calvin, Croatto, Childs, Duhm, Watts, Brueggemann, Hanson, Goldingay, Otto, Oswald, Whybray, Polan, Westermann, Blenkinsopp, Alexander, Beuken, entre los más relevantes), sin embargo no sitúa del todo el planteamiento global de cada comentarista; por ejemplo, el comentario de Watts contempla el texto isainao desde la perspectiva sincrónica, pero lo entiende como una representación teatral, de ese modo las opiniones de Watts sacadas del contexto teatral pueden adoptar, tal vez, un sentido distinto del que Gray ofrece.

El estudio de Gray, como el autor afirma, se ciñe a la sincronía del texto; sin embargo en alguna ocasión Gray remite al lector al período persa en que nació el embrión del libro de Isaías (Berquist, Bastard, Garbini, Moor); quizá, desde esta perspectiva, el autor podría haber ofrecido, aunque fuera a pie de página, la opinión de algún comentarista que hubiera analizado la diacronía del texto (Vermeulen). Esa decisión podría aportar, aunque fuera marginalmente, una visión complementaria del tema de la justicia social.

M. Gray aporta una perspectiva interesante al canalizar los resultados de su estudio a través de los parámetros de la teología de la liberación (Gutiérrez, Boff, Baslasuriya, Davidson, George, Mesters, Romero), las situaciones históricas que han transido de llanto la historia (Black, Bonhoeffer, Solulen) y el interés por la misionología (Bosch, Dikson); aún así, a nuestro entender, la aproximación del comentarista sólo roza estos aspectos, pues su desarrollo precisaría de una obra teológica que los abordara de modo expreso y amplio. Gray subraya con acierto que el tema de la justicia social constituye, en su opinión, el nervio ético del texto isaiano; podría haber aducido también otros temas (la satisfacción vicaria) relacionados con la justicia que ayudaran a perfilar la noción de justicia que late en el texto isaiano.

La bibliografía que aporta el autor pertenece abrumadoramente al área anglófona; incluso para los estudios literarios que conforman el método que adopta (Derrida, Ricoeur, Eco) el autor se vale de traducciones inglesas; lo mismo cabe decir de las referencias a los teólogos de la liberación. Las observaciones que acabamos de presentar no menoscaban el valor

de esta obra que, como hemos afirmado, constituye una aportación, desde el método retórico, interesante y bien documentada al estudio del libro de Isaías por lo que concierne a la temática de la justicia social.

Eusebio Estada 29, 3º, 1ª
07004 Palma de Mallorca
Balears, España.

Francesc RAMIS DARDER

H.G.M. WILLIAMSON, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Isaiah 1-27 in Three Volumes: Volume 1, Commentary on Isaiah 1-5* (International Critical Commentary). London – New York, T&T Clark, 2006. xxxviii-410 p. 14 × 22. £55.00

The first part of the book of Isaiah does not suffer from a lack of major commentaries in recent years. Besides those of J. Blenkinsopp and B.S. Childs on the whole of Isa – the former in three volumes (AB, 2000 / 2002 / 2003), the latter in one (OTL, 2001) – we already have two volumes of W.A.M. Beuken's commentary (covering Isa 1-12 and 13-27) in the Herder series (HTHKAT, 2003 / 2007), and he is presently working on the third volume dealing with Isa 28-39. As it takes its place in this welcome abundance, the present work by the Regius Professor of Hebrew in Oxford University, H.G.M. Williamson (henceforth W.), stands out on a number of counts. In accordance with a traditional strength of the ICC series, W's contribution is unrivalled for the thoroughness of its text-critical and philological discussion of the Hebrew text and the ancient versions. One can only imagine with awe the number of working hours that must have gone into the preparation of this part of the commentary. It was worth waiting for. The exegetical discussion too is ample, though never prolix, and always reasoned; it appears to have taken account of almost everything of importance that has been written on these chapters in recent times, without neglecting older classical studies both Jewish (Rashi, Ibn Ezra, Kimhi, and others) and Christian (Jerome, Calvin, and others). The Bibliography of studies and editions of the text occupies some twenty closely printed pages (x-xxxi) and further studies on points of detail are mentioned at appropriate places in the footnotes.

At first sight it may seem odd that W's three projected volumes are limited to the first twenty-seven chapters of Isaiah, but this is explained by the fact that an older commentary in the ICC series by G.B. Gray (1912) covered those same chapters and the planned continuation for the rest of the book never appeared. Those interested can find a short account of the complicated history of the assignment of Isaiah commentaries for the ICC series in J.E. Goldingay – D. Payne, *A Critical and Exegetical*

Commentary on Isaiah 40-55. Vol. I: Introduction and Commentary on Isaiah 40.1-44.23 (ICC; London 2006) ix.

The present volume offers a very short introduction (1-3), after which comes the commentary proper (7-410) which occupies the rest of the volume (there are no indexes). W. has decided to postpone an extended introduction until his exegetical analysis has been completed. This is quite reasonable, of course, but one cannot help thinking that already in the first volume a short introduction to the various text-witnesses and their overall qualities would have been helpful to readers of a commentary which pays such close attention to textual questions. Be that as it may, the two and a half pages of introduction in the present volume simply explain the layout of the commentary and outline very briefly W's understanding of the main lines of the composition of Isa 1-12 both as they stand now and in their diachronic development.

With regard to the latter point, it is clear that diachronic questions about the process of formation of the book can only be discussed in a preliminary manner in a commentary limited to the first five chapters. For longer discussions W. refers to his earlier publications, especially *The Book Called Isaiah*. Deutero-Isaiah's Role in Composition and Redaction (Oxford 1994) and *Variations on a Theme*. King, Messiah and Servant in the Book of Isaiah (Carlisle 1998). In the present work W. offers a very brief summary of his overall diachronic conclusions in the introduction and then examines the question in detail during the exegesis of each pericope. A broad outline must suffice here. W. distinguishes three main stages in the formation of the text: a pre-exilic edition of Isaiah (the headings in 6,1 and 14,28 belonged to this stage), an exilic edition (the headings in 2,1 and 13,1 belonged here), and the final post-exilic edition (the heading of 1,1 introduced the whole book at this stage). The pre-exilic edition, which he does not identify with the Josianic redaction of Barth, Clements, and others (367), comes to light here in the collection of the Woes in Isa 5: "This is the first piece of firm evidence we have found that is relevant to the difficult topic of recreating the earliest form of the book subsequent to Isaiah's own individual sayings" (346). The redactor of the exilic edition in the first part of the book, which began with 2,1, is identified by W. as Deutero-Isaiah himself (187). Here he maintains the view which he argued in his earlier work *The Book Called Isaiah*, but he does not insist on it, noting that "The actual identity of this redactor (my own suggestion has been that the most plausible hypothesis is that he was Deutero-Isaiah himself) is less significant than the stage in the growth of the book as a whole to which this level belongs" (212). The post-exilic edition of the book incorporated the present form of chap. 1, which has the effect of making the book as it stands function as an exhortation to repent (W. notes that he is largely in agreement with M.A. Sweeney on this point).

W. does not share the extreme scepticism of a few recent scholars with regard to the possibility of attributing a certain amount of material in Isa 1–5 to the prophet Isaiah. For example, in chap. 1, which as a finished composition belongs to the post-exilic period of composition of the book, W. sees Isaian material in vv. 2b-3.4.5-9 (except for the last three words of v. 7).11-17.18.21 (without the last two words).22-23a.24-25. In all such cases W. offers suggestions for the original location of the Isaian material in earlier editions of the book; these are often ingenious (e.g. that 1,4 originally belonged between 5,7 and 5,8) but inevitably speculative, as W. himself often admits.

With regard to Isa 1 in the horizon of the whole book, it is interesting to note that W. (with D. Carr, «Reaching for Unity in Isaiah», *JSOT* 57 [1993] 61-80) downplays the significance of the contacts between chap. 1 and chaps 65–66, which Beuken and some other scholars have interpreted as a long-range inclusion. The only really significant contacts, in W's view, are those in 1,29-31 (and possibly 1,2-3), and he insists that one should not overlook the fact that there is a major difference between chap. 1 with its appeal to readers to repent and choose the good and chaps 65–66 with their vision of a community already divided into two diametrically opposed groups.

Since it is out of the question here to discuss W's analysis of particular texts in Isa 1–5, a few remarks about his procedure must suffice. Each section of the commentary is divided into four parts: (1) a translation which in W's intention aims more at clarity than at literary elegance; (2) detailed text-critical and philological notes which offer a justification of the translation options; (3) issues relevant to the pericope as a whole (relation to its literary context; structure and poetic analysis, where relevant; genre; history of composition); (4) a detailed verse-by-verse exegetical commentary in which all sorts of literary, historical, and theological questions are examined judiciously with constant reference to the work of other scholars. One can get an idea of the scale of the work by noting that seventeen pages are devoted to the commentary on Isa 1,18-20 (103-119: compared to five pages in Wildberger's BKAT commentary), and over twenty-eight pages are devoted to the Song of the Vineyard in Isa 5,1-7 (316-344: compared to ten pages in Beuken's HThKAT volume).

One of the most controversial general positions argued in the commentary may well be that concerning the contextual function of Isa 5 within the almost universally agreed first division of the book (chaps 1–12). On the one hand, W. fully agrees that the late expression of hope in 4,2-6 has the effect of making “a separate section of chs 2-4” in the final form of the book (3). On the other hand, however, having argued that in an earlier edition of the book the first section comprised most of chaps 2–5 and the second section most of chaps 6–12, he considers that “it is the earlier

redaction which seems to have had the greater impact on the overall shape of the book" (3), and for that reason he decided to publish his study of Isa 1–5 as the first volume of the commentary. This raises a very interesting methodological question. As W. notes, "This is one of those cases where the results of synchronic and diachronic analysis do not easily mesh" (3). One wonders, however, whether our appreciation of "the overall shape of the book" should be determined at all by the results of diachronic analysis, whatever they might be. Would it not be more appropriate to base our vision of the overall shape of the book simply on a careful evaluation of the structural functions of observable data in the existing form of the book, prescinding from the question of the date when such data had been introduced into the text? In the present case, one suspects that many readers of the book of Isaiah will continue to judge that the often-noted contacts between chaps 5 and chaps 9–10 make a greater impact on their reading of chaps 1–12 than the undoubted contacts between 5,25–29(30) and 11,10–16 (and as regards the latter point, there is also a very prominent contact between 5,30 and 8,22, noted also by W., 410). However, it is probably premature to raise the point here at all, since W. will certainly have much more to say about it in his commentary on Isa 6–12.

To conclude, while we are fortunate in having a number of excellent recent commentaries on the first part of Isaiah, W's contribution is a very worthy addition to their number. His work excels for the thoroughness of its textual discussion and for the depth and balance of his exegetical analysis. One may disagree here and there with particular conclusions, as is only to be expected, but it is a magnificent achievement and we can only hope that the remaining volumes of the commentary will appear in the not-too-distant future.

Sacred Heart Parish
Western Road, Cork
Ireland

Charles CONROY

Ulrich FISTILL, *Israel und das Ostjordanland*. Untersuchungen zur Komposition von Num 21,21–36,13 im Hinblick auf die Entstehung des Buches Numeri (Österreichische Biblische Studien 30). Frankfurt am Main, Peter Lang, 2006. 274 p. 17 × 24. €48,10.

This book is a slightly revised version of the author's dissertation, written under the supervision of J.L. Ska, and submitted to the Pontifical Institute in 2003. It consists of a detailed analysis of the last section of

Numbers, chapters 21,21–36,13, with extra attention being paid to the problem of the composition of the Book as a whole. In this respect, the issue at stake is no longer to uncover the earliest traditions behind Numbers, as was the case in the classical source-critical approach, but rather to use source and redaction criticism in order to reach a better understanding of the process through which Numbers reached its “final” form. In particular, the author argues that despite its obvious complexity the Book does not result from careless editorial compilation of various sources. Rather, it was created by a *post-Priestly* redaction (“nach-priesterschriftliche Redaktion”), which composed an original work with its own, distinctive profile (“ein Werk mit eigenem Profil”).

A brief Introduction (11–22) lays out the aim of the study as well as the general methodology in use. In particular, the author discusses the concept of “composition”, as well as some of the major issues connected with the establishment, delimitation, and analysis of a biblical “text” or of a given set of texts, as in the case of Num 21,21–36,13.

Chapter one (23–44) is devoted to a discussion of the problem of the structure of the Book of Numbers. The author discusses the main criteria for organizing the Book as a whole; he also discusses some of the earlier scholarly proposals for structure (G.J. Wenham, M. Douglas, D.T. Olson, and R.P. Knierim). Fistill basically opts for Knierim’s twofold structure: Num 1,1–10,10 (planning the march through the wilderness) and 10,11–36,13 (carrying out the march); 10,11–36,13 being further divided into 10,11–21,20 (failure of the land conquest; sojourn in the wilderness) and 21,21–36,13 (beginning of the conquest). Adopting this overall structure, Fistill continues with a brief sketch of the compositional arrangement of chaps 21–36 on the level both of form and content. Despite the complexity of this collection, especially in regard to chaps 27–36, Fistill argues that its present canonical arrangement is not entirely haphazard. Rather, it reflects the attempt by a late redaction to achieve a coherent composition, especially through the use of various formal and structural links binding one pericope to another.

Chapter two (45–156) is the lengthiest of the book, and is devoted to analyzing the formation of Num 21,21–36,13. The analysis proceeds by means of detailed tradition-, literary-, and redaction-criticism of each of the individual sections comprising chaps 21–36. On the whole, Fistill identifies five distinct layers in Num 21–36: (1) ancient traditions about the conquest of Transjordan, that are clearly pre-Priestly in origin: Num 21,21–24,25*; 25,1–4 (5*), and 32,39,41–42 (!); (2) other traditions which, although they are not characterized by the presence of Priestly language, are nonetheless more difficult to date: 21,27–30; 22,4b–24,25* (Balaam); 32,34–38?; 34,16–29*?; (3) the Priestly “source”, or document, P, which Fistill identifies in Num 27,12–23 (as well as, possibly, in 22,1*); (4) later additions to the

Priestly narrative, mostly legal in content (= Ps): 26,1-65*; 27,1-11; 28,1-30,1; 30,2-17; 32,1-4*.5-32; 33,1-49*; 36,-12?; and (5) the post-Priestly redaction in Numbers, to which all the remaining texts should be assigned. At the end of the Chapter (143-156), Fistill summarizes his findings and offers a synthetic discussion of the nature of the post-Priestly redaction: what were the traditions used by that redaction; how it organized the material in Num 21-36; as well as the various redaction techniques it used in order to achieve its composition.

Chapter three (157-216) offers further reflections on the tradition-historical background as well as the aim of the post-Priestly redaction in Numbers. Fistill first emphasizes the continuity between the theology of the priestly document and the theology of the post-P redaction in Numbers (§ 3.1.). Contrary to P, however, the work of the post-P redactor(s) reflects to a significant extent the situation of the postexilic community in Persian-period Jerusalem, whose identity has been significantly questioned by the experience of the exile. This is true, for instance, of the overall concept of “Israel” reflected in the twelve-tribe system (§ 3.2.). The prominent role given to the priests, reflected through the separation of Levi’s tribe from the remainder of Israel, as well as the concern for defining membership in the community (see the genealogical lists), are part of the same social and ideological background. The account of the conquest of Transjordan in Num 21-36 and of the early settlement of some tribes reflects for its part an attempt to integrate into “Israel” members of the Yahwistic community who are not willing to live within the boundaries of postexilic Judea (§ 3.3.). This, according to Fistill, would include not only the various inhabitants of Juda’s neighbor provinces but even Jews from the Diaspora (!). On the other hand, the story of the sin committed by Israel at Baal-Pe’or (Num 25), as well as the ensuing war against Midian (Num 31), is intended to stress the danger that cultural and religious contacts with Juda’s neighbors poses to the community of “Israel”, especially in regard to mixed marriages (§ 3.4.). The reference to Midian is probably a reference encompassing the various Arabic tribes living south-west of Juda. However, the choice of Midian can also include an inner-biblical (or better: inner-pentateuchal) polemics against the traditions connecting Moses with Midian (see Ex 2,11-22; 3-4; 18 and Num 10,29-32 [§ 3.5.]). The emphasis placed on the role of Pinchas (Aaron’s great-son) in Num 25,6-15 reflects the hierocratic ideology of the post-P redactor(s) in Numbers, for whom the high priest is the main warrant of the community’s purity and integrity (§ 3.6.). In light of the previous arguments, the post-P redaction should be dated in the late Persian period, most likely in the fourth century BCE (§ 3.7.).

The book ends with a short summary (217-222), a bibliography, and two indices (authors and biblical passages).

Fistill's book is often quite stimulating, and is relevant for all who have an interest in the present Pentateuchal discussion. His concern for interpreting the Book in its final shape without losing sight of the fact that this Book has a history of its own, which can still be partly reconstructed through source- and redaction criticism, is a welcome departure from the still prevailing antinomy between (so-called) "historical" and "literary" approaches to Numbers. Other features, such as the discussion of what "composition analysis" involves on a methodological level, or the attention given to text-critical issues, provide an original contribution to the field of redaction criticism and are certainly worthy of notice.

Having said that, however, there are also a number of problems with Fistill's overall demonstration. To begin with, the detailed analysis of Num 21,21-36,13 in Chapter two is highly uneven. Some sections receive lengthy attention, while others are hardly surveyed at all. For instance, 30 pages are devoted to Num 21,21-35 (45-74), whereas the discussion of chaps 27-30 adds up to a total of four (!) pages (108-111). Clearly, this stems from the fact that Fistill considers Num 27,1-11.12-23; 28,1-30,1 and 30,2-17 to be (late) supplements to P ("Ps"), and therefore to be irrelevant to his main issue, namely, the post-Priestly redaction in Numbers. But the fact that Num 27-30 is a supplement to a (still) discrete Priestly narrative is far from obvious in view of the recent discussion (see further below), and one cannot avoid the impression that the author, here, takes for granted what he is supposed to demonstrate.

Moreover, in several instances, Fistill does not offer extant discussion of a given passage but focuses instead on a few verses which he regards as being "redactional". This is the case, in particular, in his discussion of Num 22-24 (74-76 and 76-84). There, Fistill restricts himself to discussing 22,1.2-3.4a (with 7) and 5; in Num 25,19-26,65 (102-108), he exclusively discusses 25,19; 26,8-11 and 26,29-34; in Num 32 (113-129), he mostly analyzes 32,33; 32,39-42 and 32,1-4 extensively. It is not always easy to understand why these verses, in particular, are picked up and, more importantly, how they are made to bear the weight of the demonstration for the entire passage. Furthermore, this particular approach has several important implications for the overall analysis. For instance, Fistill's methodology *de facto* excludes the possibility that there was more than one post-Priestly redaction. On the contrary, the remainder of the material, although it is only superficially addressed (or even not discussed at all, as in the case of Num 22-24), must logically be declared "pre-redactional". In many instances this judgment is far from compelling. For example, Fistill considers that, despite the presence of obvious tensions signaling the presence of various layers, Num 32 represents a late creation ("eine recht junge Erzählung") combining Priestly and Deuteronomistic language and traditions. However, because Fistill identifies two main layers in 32,1-

4*.5-32 on one hand and 32,2.(3-4?)33.34-38?.40 on the other (already a disputable reconstruction), and because he assigns the latter layer to his post-Priestly redaction, he is therefore forced to assign the former layer (32,1-4*.5-32) to the last pre-redactional layer, that is, "Ps". Why "Ps" would have recounted the story of the settlement of the Transjordan tribes remains entirely unclear; similarly unclear are the criteria for distinguishing between discrete traditions and documents, such as "Ps", and the contribution of the post-Priestly redactor(s) in Numbers. To be sure, this judgment does not apply to the entirety of Fistill's demonstration, and in some cases, such as especially Num 21,21-35 and 25,1-15(16-18), Fistill does offer a much more careful and detailed investigation, yielding more compelling results and allowing the reader a better grasp of the possible relevance of his critical analysis of the texts. One could only wish that the same kind of analysis were conducted throughout Num 21-36, and not just for a couple of passages.

Another problematic aspect of Fistill's monograph is that it engages with recent studies on the composition of the Book of Numbers only to a limited extent. Many important books and articles are only briefly quoted or not even mentioned at all. For example, the question whether Num 27,12-23 should be assigned to P or to a post-Priestly redaction in Numbers has been the subject of considerable discussion in the past ten years. Fistill, for his part, merely assigns Num 27,12-23 to P with a reference to the 1972 commentary by J. de Vaulx; the recent discussion on the post-Priestly origin of Num 27 (C. Frevel et alii) is simply not addressed at all. Another important monograph in the field, by R. ACHENBACH, *Die Vollendung der Tora. Studien zur Redaktionsgeschichte des Numeribuches im Kontext von Pentateuch und Hexateuch* (BZAR 3; Wiesbaden 2003), is indeed quoted quite a few times, but the model offered by Achenbach is never really discussed. Thus, for instance, Achenbach's demonstration that the so-called "Ps" passages in Numbers are actually *not* secondary expansions of a still discrete Priestly document but contain a late, comprehensive revision which has a distinctive "theocratic" outlook and which is responsible for the final shape of the Book of Numbers is simply not discussed by Fistill. Instead, Fistill continues to assign to "Ps" a large number of the so-called "Priestly" texts in Num 21,21-36,13, even though the coherence and purpose of such a document remain largely unclear.

There are other issues in Fistill's study which would certainly require a lengthier discussion. One could ask, in particular, whether he does not adopt the structural division proposed by Knierim too quickly, and whether the structural complexity of Numbers does not actually indicate that more than one redactor were responsible for the Book's final shape. In any event, and in spite of the preceding remarks, Fistill's study will certainly be read with profit by anyone who has an interest in the interpretation of Numbers.

His book, as stated above, is often stimulating; his approach to Numbers combining synchronic and diachronic insights commands attention and can be taken as representative of a new scholarly trend in Pentateuchal studies in Europe.

Uni Bastions
5, rue De-Candolle
CH – 1211 Genève 4

Christophe NIHAN

Sigur HJELDE, *Sigmund Mowinckel und seine Zeit. Leben und Werk eines norwegischen Alttestamentlers* (Forschungen zum Alten Testament 50). Tübingen, Mohr Siebeck, 2006. xii-356 p. 16 × 23,5.

Abbiamo a che fare, nel caso del presente volume, con un'opera non propriamente esegetica. L'autore non è un esegeta di professione e non ne fa mistero. Si tratta di un lavoro di storia dell'esegesi. Significativo, perché rievocare la persona e l'opera di Mowinckel vuol dire tracciare la storia dell'esegesi del xx secolo, tante e tali sono le questioni in cui la figura di M. è coinvolta.

Il lavoro si compone di due parti distinte. Nella prima (12-109) l'autore traccia un profilo biografico di M.: lo segue negli anni della formazione, fino alla laurea (1916), a cui fa seguito quasi immediatamente il suo inserimento nella facoltà di teologia dell'università di Kristiania (1917).

Figlio di un pastore protestante, M. nasce in un paesino nel nord della Norvegia, Kjerringøy, nel 1884, segue quindi il padre nel suo trasferimento a Beiarn (1887). Riceve la prima formazione dal padre stesso, poi frequenta la scuola cattedrale di Bergen (1898-1902). Di qui passa a frequentare la facoltà di teologia dell'Università di Kristiania, l'attuale Oslo (1902-1908). Il suo interesse nel frequentare la facoltà non è propriamente teologico, tanto che non vuole farsi ordinare parroco (lo farà più tardi, nel 1940), ma teoretico-storico. A conclusione dello studio teologico presenta il suo primo lavoro su "Nebiismo e profezia", apparso sotto forma di due articoli in NTT (1909 e 1910), dove affronta il rapporto tra profetismo estatico e profetismo classico.

Di fondamentale importanza nella sua formazione sono gli anni passati in Germania (1911-1913), studiando assiriologia alla scuola di Jensen a Marburg e soprattutto seguendo i corsi di Gunkel sui salmi a Gießen. In Germania si ammala di tubercolosi, ritorna in patria e, negli anni della convalescenza, ha una conversione ad una visione propriamente teologica della vita. Tanto che completa gli studi di teologia pratica per diventare parroco. Questo incontro personale con Dio sarà determinante per lui.

M. continuerà ad essere un convinto persecutore di un'ideale scientifico-storico della ricerca biblica, e allo stesso tempo un autentico teologo. Le due cose non erano per lui incompatibili, anzi era sua convinzione che non potessero essere separate. Nel 1916 si laurea con una tesi su Neemia.

Tra gli avvenimenti esterni che hanno marcato la sua vita dopo la laurea, Hjelde menziona il felice matrimonio con Caro, la sua infermiera (1917), da cui ha due figlie, Wencke e Vibeke. Una tappa decisiva della sua evoluzione spirituale è stata l'incontro con il movimento di Oxford (metà degli anni 30), che provocò una seconda conversione nella sua vita. In seguito a questo incontro egli si farà ordinare parroco (1940) e sarà attivamente presente nella vita della chiesa.

La seconda parte del libro (110-309) è dedicata a una considerazione tematica della figura e dell'attività di Mowickel. Anzitutto l'autore tematizza il rapporto di M. con la fede e la chiesa, soprattutto in seguito all'incontro con il movimento di Oxford (110-135). Tra le due correnti che allora si scontravano nella vita ecclesiale della Norvegia, soprattutto a livello universitario, quella liberale e quella conservativo-pietistica, M. appartiene naturalmente alla prima e rimarrà sempre fedele a questa linea progressista, schiettamente scientifica, della ricerca teologica. Ma non ha mai separato questa esigenza da quella della religione: "L'ideale non è l'uomo esclusivamente intellettuale, e neppure quello esclusivamente religioso; l'ideale è l'uomo armonioso, in cui religione, morale e cultura intellettuale sono unite" (124). Per "religione" M. non intendeva qualcosa di generico, ma concretamente una fede profonda in Gesù Cristo, inteso come il figlio di Dio, il punto di arrivo dell'esperienza religiosa. Se, prima della sua conversione, egli aveva studiato la Bibbia come storico, intendendo l'esegesi come "storia della religione biblica", ora la studia come teologo e credente. Oltre all'influsso del movimento di Oxford, influisce su questa posizione di M. l'opera di Karl Barth. Espressione di questa visione credente della Bibbia è il suo libro: "L'Antico Testamento come parola di Dio" (1938).

Il capitolo successivo parla dell'attività accademica di M. citiamo la testimonianza di uno studente: "Egli mi ha tolto la Bibbia infallibile; al suo posto mi ha dato una Bibbia viva, un libro avvincente, un libro che conteneva la rivelazione di Dio in una forma molto umana" (151).

Nei tre capitoli successivi l'autore passa in rassegna l'opera scientifica di M., anzitutto lo studio dei Salmi (162-200), poi la controversia con la scuola svedese sul rapporto tra "Literarkritik" e "Traditionskritik", e quello tra la religione di Israele e quella dei popoli vicini (201-235), infine la relazione, che ha accompagnato tutta l'opera di M., tra storia della religione e teologia (236-266).

Per ciò che riguarda lo studio dei salmi l'autore esamina naturalmente i sei "Psalmestudien" (1921-1924), soffermandosi principalmente sui primi

due volumi. Il primo contiene la discussione sul significato dell'espressione *אֵין פֶּעַלִי*, intesa da M. come indicante non nemici personali, ma una sorta di stregoni, che cercano di nuocere al prossimo con pratiche magiche. Il secondo presenta la famosa tesi dell'ascesa al trono di YHWH, che secondo M. sarebbe l'elemento centrale per comprendere l'intero salterio. M. parte dall'idea di Gunkel, che per comprendere un salmo bisogna porlo nel suo Sitz im Leben culturale. Sulla scorta di paralleli mesopotamici egli crede di poter individuare questo Sitz im Leben in una festa annuale della salita al trono di YHWH, legata al capodanno, in cui si rievocava culturalmente l'evento della creazione. Egli colloca questa festa in epoca preesilica, sullo sfondo di tradizioni cananee e mesopotamiche.

La discussione che le tesi di M. sollevarono è stata enorme e non è ancora del tutto finita. Come Hjelde segnala, il maestro stesso di M., Gunkel, non accettò le teorie del suo discepolo, né per quanto riguarda i *אֵין פֶּעַלִי*, né per la tesi dell'ascesa al trono di JHWH. Anche per ciò che riguarda il Sitz im Leben culturale del salterio la ricerca oggi sta dando ragione a Gunkel piuttosto che a M. Se non si può negare che singoli salmi abbiano un Sitz im Leben liturgico, altri certamente non portano tracce di tale ambientazione, e il salterio in quanto tale rileva più un'impostazione sapienziale e privata che culturale. Tuttavia la riscoperta del valore della liturgia, così nuova per l'ambiente protestante, rimane, anche con le dovute riserve, un elemento fondamentale della ricerca sui salmi.

Al di là delle particolari soluzioni esegetiche proposte da M., da cui è giusto talora dissentire, ciò che il libro di Hjelde aiuta a cogliere è la sua posizione fondamentale di fronte all'Antico Testamento, che sembra ancor oggi di particolare attualità. Nel cap. II l'autore tratta il rapporto tra teologia e scienza della religione, tracciando un'evoluzione nella persona e nell'opera di M. Nell'opuscolo "Che abbiamo noi cristiani nell'Antico Testamento?" (1922), M. risponde che in esso abbiamo una rivelazione di Dio in senso speciale. Ciò non toglie importanza allo studio scientifico: perché questo permette di cogliere il lato umano della rivelazione, non solo, ma anche fa percepire una linea di sviluppo, fa vedere che la corrente della rivelazione sfocia in Gesù Cristo (239). L'importanza di Cristo nell'esegesi dell'Antico Testamento viene rilevata anche nell'opera citata: "L'Antico Testamento come parola di Dio". M. si domanda come una persona storica possa essere allo stesso tempo il centro assoluto della storia, giungendo ad affermare: "La vera e propria risposta a questa domanda è naturalmente quella totale sottomissione del sentimento, della volontà e della persona che si chiama fede, e che rende uno convinto che Dio è Dio, e perciò lo conduce anche alla convinzione che Gesù Cristo è più che una persona storica nel mondo della relatività, che egli è allo stesso tempo 'figlio di Dio'. Solo questa fede permette a uno di vedere la rivelazione di Dio nell'Antico Testamento, nella Bibbia come un tutto" (240). E

dunque per M. la fede non impedisce uno studio scientifico della Bibbia, ma al contrario ne è un presupposto fondamentale: "Solo chi conosce la religione nella sua propria vita può anche studiarla nella sua effettività e capirla" (255).

Gli ultimi tre capitoli sono dedicati, il dodicesimo all'opera di M. come traduttore della Bibbia (267-280): qui viene illustrata principalmente la traduzione compiuta da M. insieme con Michelet e Messel dell'intero Antico Testamento in Norvegese (1929-1963). La traduzione è corredata da annotazioni di carattere sia storico che teologico ed è un ulteriore documento del tipo di esegesi perseguita da M.. Il cap. 13 tratta dell'opera di M. come predicatore (281-300), offrendo il testo di due sue prediche, e il cap. 14 (301-309) è dedicato a un breve bilancio complessivo dell'opera esegetica di M. Significativo è il fatto che i suoi libri più importanti vengono ancor oggi, a più di quarant'anni dalla sua morte (1965), ristampati in traduzione inglese.

Il volume è corredata da una serie di 21 fotografie dei luoghi e delle persone legati alla vita di M. (311-322), da una bibliografia completa delle sue opere (323-241), da una scelta delle recensioni scritte su di esse (342-346), e da ulteriore bibliografia su M. (346-358). Un indice dei nomi (359-365) facilita la lettura.

Dobbiamo essere grati all'autore per questo schizzo suggestivo, scritto con acribia e simpatia critica, che permettere di cogliere il background umano, culturale e religioso di una delle figure più significative dell'esegesi del XX secolo.

Via L. Ghiberti, 2
I-00153 Roma

Gianni BARBIERO

Novum Testamentum

Benjamin L. GLADD, *Revealing the Mysteryion*. The Use of Mystery in Daniel and Second Temple Judaism with Its Bearing of First Corinthians (BZNW 160) Berlin – New York, Walter de Gruyter, 2008, xxiv-352 p. 16 × 23,5

Desde mediados del siglo XX ha predominado entre los investigadores que estudian el uso y significado del término *mysterion* en el Nuevo Testamento la idea de que sus raíces hay que buscarlas en el Antiguo Testamento y el Judaísmo del Segundo templo y no en el mundo helenista (cultos mistéricos, gnosticismo, magia, filosofía), como se había hecho de manera predominante en los años anteriores. En este contexto se inscribe el estudio de B. Gladd sobre el significado de *mysterion* en 1 Cor a la luz del uso y significado del término en el libro de Daniel, en los documentos de Qumrán y en otras obras de la literatura judía de la época del Segundo Templo. La pertinencia de esta investigación es justificada por el autor en el hecho de que el término *mysterion* todavía no ha sido suficientemente estudiado en el libro de Daniel y en los documentos del Mar Muerto y en que tampoco existen estudios específicos de su uso en 1 Cor que tengan en cuenta los contextos en que la palabra es utilizada y la presencia en esos contextos de citas o alusiones al AT. Para proceder con rigor a la hora de descubrir estas alusiones a textos del AT en los pasajes de la carta que utilizan el término *mysterion*, Gladd se preocupa, en el capítulo I (“Introduction”), de precisar los criterios que va a utilizar para identificar la existencia de una alusión veterotestamentaria; explica igualmente en este capítulo introductorio el método que sigue para analizar cómo entiende Pablo la referencia al AT y su función con relación al *mysterion*, y advierte que, aún tratándose de un término técnico, procederá con la suficiente cautela, considerando cuidadosamente el contexto inmediato en el que se usa la palabra, para no caer en la tentación de querer descubrir en cada uso del término todo su potencial de significado. Con estas premisas y, después de presentar una breve historia de la investigación, se aborda en primer lugar el análisis del uso y significado de “misterio” en el libro de Daniel, que, según la opinión de R.E. Brown, *The Semitic Background of the Term “Mystery” in the New Testament* (Biblical Series 21; Philadelphia, PA 1968) 22-30, asumida por los investigadores posteriores, constituye la base del uso del concepto en Qumrán.

El estudio del uso en Dn del sustantivo arameo *rāz*, traducido en griego como *mysterion*, se centra en tres aspectos o dimensiones: la forma del misterio, su contenido y su función. En cuanto a la forma, se destaca el carácter de revelación en dos fases que el misterio tiene en el libro de

Daniel: en primer lugar, Dios revela el misterio a través de un sueño, una visión o un texto de la Escritura; en un segundo momento revela al intérprete — Daniel — el significado del sueño, la visión o el texto. Por lo que se refiere al contenido del misterio, siempre se refiere a los últimos días, a los acontecimientos escatológicos, que incluyen especialmente el establecimiento del reinado definitivo de Dios, la elevación y caída de los enemigos de Israel y la vindicación del pueblo de Dios. Finalmente, el uso de “misterio” tiene en el libro una función polémica frente a la pretendida sabiduría de los idólatras, representada por los sabios de Babilonia. Como conclusión de la investigación, Gladd ofrece una definición de “misterio” en el libro de Daniel: “an apocalyptic revelation concerning eschatological events mediated by an angel or human that was previously hidden but has been subsequently revealed” (50). Resulta un tanto sorprendente que, después de haber subrayado como aportación original de la investigación el señalar la función polémica que tiene el uso del término, ésta no haya sido recogida en la definición.

Las conclusiones alcanzadas sobre el uso y significado del término “misterio” en el libro de Daniel resultan determinantes para el resto de la investigación, de modo que el análisis de sus apariciones en los escritos del Judaísmo del Segundo Templo (documentos del Mar Muerto, pseudoepígrafos y apócrifos del Antiguo Testamento, targums, Filón y Josefo) busca verificar cómo y en qué medida la definición de misterio que ha sido propuesta es aplicable también a esta literatura. Una especial atención es prestada al uso del término “misterio” en los escritos del Mar Muerto, analizando todos los textos en que aparece y el contexto en el que se usa, indagando particularmente si en ese contexto aparecen rasgos apocalípticos. Aunque menos exhaustivo es también suficientemente informativo el estudio del misterio en la restante literatura del Segundo Templo. Dada la cantidad y variedad de los escritos analizados, es lógico que no siempre el uso del término “misterio” se ajuste a la definición propuesta, pero, en general se puede comprobar que en la mayoría de los textos estudiados el concepto de misterio depende del libro de Daniel, de modo que tiene una más o menos subrayada dimensión escatológica e incluye siempre la idea de revelación. Menos concluyente resulta el juicio sobre la función polémica del uso de “misterio”, de modo que, mientras se puede afirmar como resultado de la investigación que “mystery is eschatological” y “mystery is a revelation”, únicamente se puede decir que “mystery can be polemical” (106-107).

El concepto de misterio definido a partir del libro de Daniel, enriquecido en ocasiones con matices encontrados en el análisis de los otros textos estudiados, se aplica, a partir del capítulo IV, que incluye una breve introducción a 1 Cor, al estudio de los pasajes de esta carta en los que aparece el término *mysterion*. Aceptando la lectura variante de 2,1 que lo contiene,

son seis los textos que se analizan, distribuidos en cuatro capítulos: 4,2.7 (capítulo IV); 4,1 (capítulo V); 13,2 y 14,2 (capítulo VI), 15,51 (capítulo VII). La conclusión general de que el uso de *mysterion* en 1 Cor se inscribe en la esfera del pensamiento apocalíptico y hace referencia a la revelación de la sabiduría y que, por lo menos en 1 Cor 2, tiene carácter polémico frente a la sabiduría del mundo, se apoya en un cuidadoso análisis del contexto en que se utiliza el sustantivo y en una sólida argumentación sobre las citas y alusiones a pasajes del Antiguo Testamento que en él aparecen. Sin embargo, no siempre resulta convincente la relación que se establece entre el significado de *mysterion* en 1 Cor y el concepto de misterio definido a partir del estudio hecho sobre el libro de Daniel. Por poner un ejemplo, la caracterización de Pablo como “an apocalyptic seer” (163) al estilo de Daniel, basada en la afirmación de que se presentó ante los corintios con “temor y temblor” (1 Cor 2,3), no tiene en cuenta que en Dn y en los otros textos del AT citados (121-122) el temor se apodera del vidente cuando recibe la revelación del misterio, no cuando tiene que comunicarlo a los demás, como es el caso de Pablo. Igualmente, la conexión que se establece entre Pablo y Daniel apoyándose en que aquél se describe como “administrador de los misterios de Dios” (1 Cor 4,1) resulta más bien débil, ya que la fidelidad exigible a un administrador, el que sea responsable ante Dios y el que en el momento del juicio quedarán al descubierto los secretos del corazón (cf. 1 Cor 4,2-5), aunque aparezcan en el libro de Daniel en relación con su papel de revelador de misterios, no son aplicables en exclusiva a los profetas o videntes apocalípticos.

Además de esta tendencia a interpretar los textos paulinos en consonancia con el misterio “daniélico”, se echa de menos una mayor precisión a la hora de definir lo que significa la dimensión apocalíptica o escatológica (Gladd usa los dos términos indistintamente) del misterio, tanto más cuanto que en Pablo nos encontramos con una concepción escatológica distinta de la que aparece en el Antiguo Testamento y en el Judaísmo; según Pablo, ahora Dios no sólo ha revelado en Cristo el misterio de la salvación, sino que lo ha realizado: el misterio que en 1 Cor 1-2 se identifica con la sabiduría de la cruz es el misterio que está realizando la salvación de los que creen.

Aunque el interés por mostrar la continuidad entre el concepto de misterio en el libro de Daniel y los escritos del Segundo Templo, por un lado, y 1 Cor, por otro, que constituye el objetivo de la investigación, ha podido dejar un tanto en la sombra la novedad que comporta el uso paulino del término, la obra de Gladd no sólo completa y enriquece los estudios existente sobre el concepto de misterio en el libro de Daniel y el Judaísmo del Segundo Templo y sobre las raíces veterotestamentarias y judías de su uso por parte de los escritores del Nuevo Testamento, concretamente de Pablo, sino que también realiza muy interesantes y sugerentes aportaciones

para la interpretación de los pasajes de 1 Cor donde aparece el término *mysterion*, mostrando, por ejemplo, cómo la revelación del misterio, esto es, de la sabiduría de Dios, que se opone a la sabiduría del mundo, está al servicio de la preocupación principal de la carta, que es la unidad de la Iglesia, o iluminando el modo en que Pablo utiliza e interpreta los textos del AT, como es el caso de la cita de Is 64,9 en 1 Cor 2,9 y de Gn 2,7 en 1 Cor 15,45.

Acosta 46-4, 1 B
E-42300 El Burgo de Osma (Soria)

Tomás OTERO LÁZARO

Varia

John BARTON, *The Nature of Biblical Criticism*. Louisville, Kentucky - London, U.K., Westminster John Knox Press, 2007. x-206 p. 15 × 23. \$24.95 - £16.99.

Who would be likely to read a book on *The Nature of Biblical Criticism*? Experienced practitioners? ecclesiastical opponents? critics of methodological scholasticism? colleagues in classics or literary studies? interested members of the general public? participants in interreligious dialogue? students who want more than just a survey of contemporary approaches to the Bible? The author, John Barton, Professor of the Interpretation of Holy Scripture at the University of Oxford, could build on many years of reflection on the issue, starting from his *Reading the Old Testament*. Method in Biblical Studies 1984 (London 1996) and including his experience as the editor of the *Cambridge Companion to Biblical Interpretation* (Cambridge 1998), when he was invited to give a series of lectures on “the nature of” the discipline at the University of Edinburgh in 2005.

This book is characterized by an unyielding insistence on the question of what are the defining characteristics of biblical criticism, of what is essential for it and what merely accidental, of what makes it critical in contradistinction to a noncritical (rather than simply on some time-scale, pre-critical or post-critical) attitude towards the biblical text. Throughout the book, the *cantus firmus* is that biblical criticism is ‘by definition a literary operation’ (30, cf. 101), *i.e.*, that it reflects a reader’s awareness of and interest in the question of semantics and the genre of biblical — like any other — texts, and of their plain sense. Remarkable is already the opening statement is remarkable: “The term ‘biblical criticism’ is now somewhat outmoded”, since in an academic culture where literary criticism (and communication sciences) seems to function as the lead discipline, this must be regarded not as a sign of progress but of disorientation. Barton objects to the (in many circles) more popular convention of speaking of the “historical-critical method” and states his “reservations about building a historical quest into the very name of the discipline” (1). In ten theses biblical criticism is located between a “liturgical or devotional use of the Bible” (or other forms of “application’ of the Bible) on the one hand, and ‘questions of Introduction’ or history” on the other (5-7). It is “an example of the kind of criticism that is normal in the humanities”; one would, perhaps, have to think of hermeneutics as a “hypothetico-deductive method” — D. Føllesdal, “Hermeneutics and the Hypothetico-Deductive

Method", *Dialectica* 33 (1979) 319-336 — if it were not for the term "method".

Chapter 2 (Difficulties in the Text: 9-30) argues for classifying biblical criticism as a literary enterprise. "Biblical criticism consists in understanding the nature of a written text [...] as a finished whole, with its own internal dynamic and logic" (19). This is the question of "genre" to which Barton gives more weight than he does to the investigation of the "coherence" of a text. Chapter 3 (The "Historical-Critical Method": 31-68) is probably the most polemical chapter. Barton rejects the idea that 'the nature of' biblical criticism/studies can be identified with reference to the passion for historical questions and a corresponding critique of texts as historical sources. "There is no doubt that some critical scholars have focused very strongly on the earliest stage of a text that can be reconstructed. [...] Introduction has indeed been excavative, but it is only a small part of the whole critical enterprise" (40-41; referring to Robert Alter's terminology in his *The Art of Biblical Narrative*, New York 1981). And "method" is a term which should not eclipse the importance of "intuition", "empathy" or "understanding" when it comes to the essence of critical reading (53-62). The broader frame of reference for these reflections shines through in the terse statement "[...] in the humanities, past writers are continually rediscovered and reinterpreted" (57).

Chapter 4 (The Plain Sense: 69-116) draws a fine line between the ideal of "understanding" a text and the risk of "restating" a text. "[...] recognizing the plain sense of a word, a sentence, a passage, or a book is not the same as restating that sense in one's own words. [...] The exegete's task is to help the reader to understand the text, not to bring out and restate the meaning in such a way that the text is evacuated of its content and replaced with the exegete's interpretation" (111-112). The "plain sense", Barton's term for the genuine voice of the text, "needs to be defended against concepts of getting at the "original", the "intended", the "historical" or the "literal" sense or of achieving a "canonical reading" (69-101). Attempts are made to honour what is convincing about such concepts and to balance it against what is not when it comes to defining "the nature of" biblical criticism. To mention only one scholar whose work is addressed: Barton comments on Francis Watson's *Text and Truth. Redefining Biblical Theology* (Edinburgh 1997): "Watson rightly opposes a positivistic approach to what he calls the literal sense of the Bible, but sees as the correct alternative to this an application of the text within the framework of a canonical context. I am arguing for freedom from a constraining canonical context" (108, n. 83).

Chapter 5 offers reflections on "The Origins of Biblical Criticism" (117-136), more in conversation with critics who have a liking for simple labels than with scholars in intellectual history. "Those who see biblical

criticism as the enemy of a wholesome appropriation of the Bible often accuse it of having sold out to the Enlightenment [...]” (118). A look at text-oriented competence in antiquity and successive periods, however, makes it clear “that neither the Enlightenment, nor the Reformation, nor even the Renaissance was a necessary precondition of such [critical] questions arising in the mind of an acute reader. [...] The Enlightenment perhaps did release critical awareness to an extent that had not been in evidence earlier, but it did not create such awareness in itself” (132). This is a suggestion worth pursuing further, with regard to the significance of (ancient) studies in rhetoric as well as with regard to the problem of defining periods in intellectual history. For a literary critic like Johann Gottfried Herder who wrote in the 1780s it was most natural not just to refer to Robert Lowth (1740s) and Richard Simon (1670s), but also to Hugo Grotius (1640s) and Erasmus (1520s), and Erasmus, for all his joking about “the donkey with the lyre”, would probably not have denied erudition to the Franciscan Nicolas of Lyra (*d.* 1349).

Chapter 6 (Biblical Criticism and Religious Belief: 137-186) starts out from an alarming assertion by Christopher Rowland: “The focus on analysis and on the parts at the expense of the whole erodes a sense of the coherence of scripture. Within ministerial training biblical studies can become a process of alienation rather than integration, threatening to rob ordinands of the very scripture which nurtured their faith and their sense of vocation” (138). Barton considers a range of programmatic concepts of a more holistic or more deliberately theological hermeneutic, but finds reasons to insist that “Assimilating any text, the Bible included, is a two-stage operation. The first stage is a perception of the text’s meaning; the second, an evaluation of that meaning in relation to what one already believes to be the case”. (159). The challenge is to take the second stage seriously without presupposing some catch-all “holistic” or “canonical” or dogmatic knowledge, not, however, to renounce the first stage. The impulse in biblical criticism to understand the ‘plain sense’ of individual texts may erode certain ideas about “the coherence of scripture”; it may even more help to shape them.

Barton puts a lot of didactic energy into his discussion of defining literary or historical aspects of biblical criticism. One well-chosen example is the concern with a harmonization of the gospel accounts of the life of Jesus as transcripts of the historical facts in comparison with a concern to understand the gospels “as constructed literary works” (24). However, the question could be asked how far a perception of the literary character of, say, the Gospel of Matthew results from a sceptical historical view of the information about the assumed author which is provided in Matt 9,9 and 10,3. And to what extent were noncritical readers interested in biblical narratives as texts which report events or which present example stories? If

Matt 9,9-13 offers an example of how Hos 6,6 is rightly (or best) to be understood, it may not have mattered much to readers whether the tax collector's name was Matthew (as in Matt) or Levi (as in Mark and Luke) or even whether he was a fictional character. Reading the story as an *exemplum* would, of course, already have implied a critical consideration of genre in the sense of Barton's "literary operation" and therefore would not have been a noncritical reading anyway.

Briefly stated, the book suggests the following main theses: Biblical criticism is a literary enterprise (chap. 2), it is not a historical method (chap. 3). Biblical criticism gives the text – or its respective author(s) – a voice (chap. 4), it is not counter-theological (chap. 6). A provocation lies in the entirely unassuming tone of these theses. However, their force is displayed when Barton uses them to let the air out of hypotheses about the 'nature' of biblical criticism which he introduces, typically, by expressions such as 'people are prone to think that ...'. A range of Jewish and Christian scholars in different camps is referred to who opt, *e.g.*, for historical or ecclesiastical or canonical or advocacy or more secular readings in some form of opposition to what they conceive of as standard "biblical criticism". In general these scholars are only introduced by some brief remarks or quotations so that readers are required either to build on their familiarity with the views in question (which in some cases they may so far have shared) or invited to start engaging with them.

Two points relating to the quest for the "origins" or the history of biblical interpretation may serve to stimulate further debate: Julius Wellhausen is mentioned on some 12 occasions (see the index), honoured – rightly or wrongly – with the epithet "giant" (189), but only indirectly subjected to anything like a study from a perspective of intellectual history. Hermann Samuel Reimarus is mentioned on two occasions (34, 137) and classified as someone whose work in biblical criticism was "hostile, in both intention and effect, not only to the Bible itself but also to theology", but one is left to wonder what exactly was wrong with this author's investigation of Exod 12,29-42 which effectively led him to conclude that "historiography" would be an unwarranted definition of the literary genre of the text. As Reimarus was one of the most popular philosophers of religion of his day (and Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, his editor, one of the most significant ones), readers might want to study further the intersection of biblical criticism and philosophy of religion. As Wellhausen – not unlike Abraham Kuenen – was one of the most energetic historians of religion of his day (notwithstanding his idiosyncratic judgment about what is "natural" and what is "artificial" in religious ritual), readers might want to engage more with the intersection of biblical criticism and history of religion. And whoever wonders why names such as those of Reimarus or Wellhausen are still remembered today might like to study the views of

their contemporaries whose scholarly — and indeed ecclesiastical — rhetoric had become so empty for these critics.

The strength of Barton's book will turn out to be his insistence on the question of how scholars approached the biblical texts as literary entities: whatever specimens of biblical criticism past or present they may consult (or indeed produce), those who have read the book will remember that the rules of literary criticism (concerning semantics, genre, and the quest for the "plain sense") must not be neglected in the study of the Bible. The book, therefore, is a most valuable signpost.

Nordhaeuser Strasse 63
99089 Erfurt, Germany

Christoph BULTMANN

LIBRI AD DIRECTIONEM MISSI

Tutti i libri o i fascicoli che vengono inviati alla Direzione appaiono in questo elenco. Il fatto che vi figurino non implica alcun giudizio su di essi. Recensioni più ampie dei libri verranno fatte secondo il parere del Redattore.

I libri inviati alla Direzione che non sono stati chiesti direttamente per recensione non si restituiscono in nessun caso, anche se non potranno essere recensiti. Tutti i libri insieme con gli estratti di articoli inviati alla Direzione vengono trasmessi all'Editore dell'*Elenchus of Biblica* e vi appariranno secondo il giudizio dell'Editore.

I libri vanno inviati alla "Direzione di *Biblica*, Pontificio Istituto Biblico – Via della Pilotta, 25 – I-00187 Roma – Italia".

Linville, James R., *Amos and the Cosmic Imagination* (SOTSMS). Aldershot, Ashgate, 2008. xii-199 p. 15,5 × 24

Luis de León, *Comentario sobre el Génesis*. (Expositio in Genesim). Introducción, transcripción, versión y notas de Hipólito Navarro Rodríguez. Madrid, Ediciones Escorialenses, 2009. 1-420 p. 17 × 24

Luzarraga, Jesús, *El Evangelio de Juan en las versiones siríacas* (Subsidia Biblica 33). Roma, Editrice Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 2008. 357 p. 16,5 × 24

Macala, André, *A escatologia no livro do Apocalipse*. Da sua realização no presente litúrgico à conclusão da história (Tesi Gregoriana, Serie Teologia 163). Roma, Editrice Pontificia Università Gregoriana, 2008. 389 p. 17 × 24

MacDonald, Nathan, *Not Bread Alone*. The Uses of Food in the Old Testament. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2008. xii-265 p. 16 × 24

MacMullen, Ramsay, *The Second Church*. Popular Christianity. A.D. 200–400 (Writings from the Greco-Roman World Supplement Series 1). Atlanta, Society of Biblical Literature, 2009. xii-210 p. 18 × 25. \$24.95

Maier, Christl M., *Daughter Zion, Mother Zion*. Gender, Space, and the Sacred in Ancient Israel. Minneapolis, Fortress Press, 2008. x-285 p. 15 × 23

Marguerat, Daniel (sous la direction de), *Introduction au Nouveau Testament*. Son histoire, son écriture, sa théologie (Le Monde de la Bible 41). Genève, Labor et Fides, 2008. 547 p. 15 × 22,5. €40 – SFr 60.00

Maritano, Mario – **dal Covolo**, Enrico (a cura di), *Le Parabole del Regno nel Commento a Matteo*. Lettura origeniana (Nuova Biblioteca di Scienze Religiose 19). Roma, LAS, 2009. 112 p. 13 × 24. €9

Marsden, Richard (ed.), *The Old English Heptateuch and ælfric's Libellus de Veteri Testamento et Novo*. Volume One: Introduction and Text (Early English Text Society 330). Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2008. clxxix-230 p. 14,5 × 22. £60.00

Martin, Lee Roy, *The Unheard Voice of God*. A Pentecostal Hearing of the Book of Judges (Journal of Pentecostal Theology Supplement Series 32). Blandford Forum, Deo Publishing, 2008. xiv-287 p. 15,5 × 24

Mason, Steven D., *"Eternal Covenant" in the Pentateuch*. The Contours of an Elusive Phrase (Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies 494). New York – London, T&T Clark, 2008. x-261 p. 16 × 24. £70.00

Mathys, Hans-Peter, *Das Astarte-Quadrat*. Zürich, Theologischer Verlag Zürich, 2008. 207 p. 15 × 22,5. €22 – SFr 32,–

Matthews, Victor H., *More Than Meets the Ear*. Discovering the Hidden Contexts of Old Testament Conversations. Grand Rapids, Michigan – Cambridge, U. K., William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2008. xii-198 p. 15 × 23. \$30.00 – \$16.99

McConville, J. G., *God and Earthly Power*. An Old Testament Political Theology Genesis– Kings. London – New York, T&T Clark, 2008. xii-200p. 15,5 × 23,5. £25.00

McGrath, James F., *The Only True God*. Early Christian Monotheism in its Jewish Context. Urbana – Chicago, University of Illinois Press, 2009. ix-156 p. 16 × 23,5. \$40.00

McHugh, John F., *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on John 1–4* (The International Critical Commentary). London – New York, T&T Clark, 2009. xl-324 p. 14,5 × 22. £55.00

Meek, James A., *The Gentile Mission in Old Testament Citations in Acts*. Text, Hermeneutics, and Purpose (Library of New Testament Studies 385). London – New York, T&T Clark, 2008. viii-179 p. 16 × 24. £65.00

Meier, John P., *A Marginal Jew*. Rethinking the Historical Jesus. Volume Four, Law and Love (The Anchor Bible Reference Library). New Haven – London, Yale University Press, 2009. xiv-735 p. 16,5 × 24. £30.00

Merlo, Paolo, *La religione dell'antico Israele* (Quality Paperbacks 291). Roma, Carocci Editore, 2009. 139 p. 13,5 × 21,5. €14,60

Michaud, Jean-Marc (éd.), *Le royaume d'Ougarit de la Crète à l'Euphrate*. Nouveaux axes de recherche (Proche-Orient et Littérature Ougaritique 2). Actes du Congrès International de Sherbrooke 2005. Sherbrooke, Éditions GGC, 2007. xv-654 p. 15 × 23

Middleton, Paul – **Paddison**, Angus – **Wenell**, Karen (eds.), *Paul, Grace and Freedom*. Essays in Honour of John K. Riches. London – New York, T&T Clark, 2009. xvii-215 p. 16 × 24. £65.00

Mies, Françoise (éd.), *Bible et art. L'âme des sens* (Le livre et le rouleau 34). Namur, Presses Universitaires de Namur – Bruxelles, Éditions Lessius, 2009. 192 p. 14,4 × 21,5. €19

Mihaila, Corin, *The Paul-Apollos Relationship and Paul's Stance Toward Greco-Roman Rhetoric. An Exegetical and Socio-historical Study of 1 Corinthians 1–4* (Library of New Testament Studies 402). London – New York, T&T Clark, 2009. xix-252 p. 15,5 × 23. £60.00

Moberly, R. W. L., *The Theology of the Book of Exodus* (Old Testament Theology). Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2009. xiv-272 p. 14 × 21,5

Montague, George T., SM, *First and Second Timothy, Titus*. (Catholic Commentary on Sacred Scripture). Grand Rapids, Baker Academic, 2008. 269 p. 15 × 23

Moore, Daniel F., *Jesus, an Emerging Jewish Mosaic. Jewish Perspectives, Post-Holocaust* (Jewish and Christian Texts in Contexts and Related Studies 2). New York – London, T & T Clark, 2008. xi-326 p. 16 × 24. £75.00

Moreno García, Abdón, *Paulus Pastor*. El ministerio del Espíritu (Monografías Sagrada Escritura 25). Valencia, EDICEP Editorial, 2008. 328 p. 16,5 × 23,5

Mosetto, Francesco, *Lettura degli Atti degli Apostoli*. Leumann (TO), Editrice Elledici, 2009. 208 p. 17 × 24. €39,90

Mullen, Roderic L. – **Crisp**, Simon – **Parker**, D. C. (eds.), *The Gospel According to John in the Byzantine Tradition*. First Edition. Stuttgart, Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2007. xlviii-273 p. 12 × 17,5. £49.99 – \$89.95

Müller, Mogens, *The Expression 'Son of Man' and the Development of Christology. A History of Interpretation* (Copenhagen International Seminar). London – Oakville, Equinox Publishing Ltd, 2008. viii-128 p. 15,5 × 23,5. £60.00

Murphy-O'Connor, Jérôme, *Éphèse au temps de saint Paul* (Initiations bibliques) Paris. Les Éditions du Cerf, 2008. 352 p. 13,5 × 21,5. €44

Murphy-O'Connor, Jerome, *Keys To First Corinthians*. Revisiting the Major Issues. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2009. xii-307 p. 16 × 24. £50.00

Myers, Ched, *Binding the Strong Man*. A Political Reading of Mark's Story of Jesus. Twentieth Anniversary Edition. Maryknoll, Orbis Books, 2008. lix-500 p. 15,5 × 23. £15.99

Neufeld, Dietmar (ed.), *The Social Sciences and Biblical Translation* (Society of Biblical Literature Symposium Series 41). Atlanta, Society of Biblical Literature, 2008. ix-188 p. 15 × 23

Neyrey, Jerome H. – Stewart, Eric C. (eds.), *The Social World of the New Testament. Insights and Models*. Peabody, Hendrickson Publishers, 2008. xxiv-295 p. 15 × 23. £13.99

Niditch, Susan, *Judges. A Commentary (OTL)*. Louisville – London, Westminster John Knox Press, 2008. xxviii-290 p. 15 × 23. £24.99

Nissinen, Marti – Uro, Risto (eds.), *Sacred Marriages. The Divine-Human Sexual Metaphor from Sumer to Early Christianity*. Winona Lake, Eisenbrauns, 2008. xii-543 p. 16 × 23. \$59.50

Norelli, Enrico, *Marie des apocryphes. Enquête sur la mère de Jésus dans le christianisme antique (Christianismes antiques)*. Genève, Labor et Fides, 2009. 178 p. 15 × 22,5. €22 – SFr 34,-

O'Brien, Julia M., *Challenging Prophetic Metaphor. Theology and Ideology in the Prophets*. Louisville – London, Westminster John Knox Press, 2008. xxii-202 p. 15 × 23. £16.99

Oegema, Gerbern S. – Charlesworth, James H. (eds.), *The Pseudepigrapha and Christian Origins. Essays from the Studiorum Novi Testamenti Societas (Jewish and Christian Texts in Contexts and Related Studies 4)*. New York – London, T&T Clark, 2008. xv-295 p. 15 × 23,5. £70.00

Orlando, Luigi, *La Lettera di Giacomo, La Seconda Lettera di Pietro, La Lettera di Giuda (Analecta Nicolaiana 7)*. Bari, Ecumenica Editrice, 2008. 191 p. 17 × 24,5. €15

Oswald, Wolfgang, *Nathan der Prophet. Eine Untersuchung zu 2Samuel 7 und 12 und 1Könige 1 (ATANT 94)*. Zürich, Theologischer Verlag Zürich, 2008. 318 p. 16,5 × 24. €44 – SFr 64,-

Oswald, Wolfgang, *Staatstheorie im Alten Israel. Der politische Diskurs im Pentateuch und in den Geschichtsbüchern des Alten Testaments*. Stuttgart, Verlag W. Kohlhammer, 2009. 288 p. 15,5 × 23. €32 – SFr 54,90

Padilla, Osvaldo, *The Speeches of Outsiders in Acts. Poetics, Theology and Historiography (SNTSMS 144)*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2008. xv-266 p. 14 × 22. £55.00 – \$110.00

Pahl, Michael W., *Discerning the 'Word of the Lord'. The 'Word of the Lord' in Thessalonians 4:15 (Library of New Testament Studies 398)*. London – New York, T&T Clark, 2009. xii-203 p. 16 × 24. £65.00

Papola, Grazia, *L'alleanza di Moab. Studio esegetico teologico di Dt 28,69-30,20 (AnBib 174)*. Roma, Editrice Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 2008. 366 p. 16,5 × 24

Passamanek, Stephen M., *Modalities in Medieval Jewish Law for Public Order and Safety (HUCA Supplements 6)*. Cincinnati, Hebrew Union College, 2009. 115 p. 15,5 × 23,5

Pazzini, Domenico, *Lingua e teologia in Origene. Il Commento a Giovanni* (Studi Biblici 160). Brescia, Paideia Editrice, 2009. 205 p. 13,5 × 21. €23,40

Pellegrini, Silvia, *L'ultimo segno. Il messaggio della vita nel racconto della risurrezione di Lazzaro* (Scienze religiose. Nuova serie 20). Bologna, Edizioni Dehoniane, 2009. 273 p. 14 × 21. €18,60

Penna, Romano (versione e commento di), *Lettera ai Romani. III. Rm.12-16* (Scritti delle origini cristiane 6). Bologna, Edizioni Dehoniane, 2008. 343 p. 17 × 24 p. €29

Penna, Romano, *Paolo e la chiesa di Roma* (Biblioteca di cultura religiosa 67). Brescia, Paideia Editrice, 2009. 301 p. 13,5 × 21. €27,60

Perry, T. Anthony, *God's Twilight Zone. Wisdom in the Hebrew Bible*. Peabody, Hendrickson Publishers, 2008. xxi-208 p. £10.99. 14 × 21,5

Pinçon, Bertrand, *L'énigme du bonheur. Étude sur le sujet du bien dans le livre de Qohélet*. (Supplements to the Vetus Testamentum 119). Leiden – Boston, Brill, 2008. xiv-311 p. 17 × 24,5. \$158.00 – €99

Pitta, Antonio, *Paolo, la Scrittura e la Legge*. Antiche e nuove prospettive (Studi Biblici 57). Bologna, Edizioni Dehoniane Bologna, 2009. 259 p. 14 × 21. €27,40

Prieto Fernández, Francisco José, *Las figuras cambiantes de Jesús en la literatura cristiana antigua* (Plenitudo Temporis 10). Salamanca, Publicaciones Universidad Pontificia, 2009. 380 p. 17 × 24. €33

Puig y Tàrrach, Armand (a cura de), *La violència en la Bíblia* (Scripta Biblica 9). Tarragona, Associació Bíblica de Catalunya, 2009. 295 p. 15,5 × 23,5

Puskas, Charles B. – **Crump**, David, *An Introduction to the Gospels and Acts*. Grand Rapids, Michigan – Cambridge, U. K., William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2008. xvii-210 p. 15 × 22,5. \$19.00–£10.99

Redditt, Paul L., *Introduction to the Prophets*. Grand Rapids, Michigan – Cambridge, U. K., William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2008. xv-404 p. 15 × 23. \$26.00 – £14.99

Redescribing Christian Origins? Riscrivere le origini cristiane? (Annali di Storia dell'esegesi 25/2). Dibattito con Francis **Bovon**, Ron **Cameron**, Adriana **Destro**, John S. **Kloppenborg**. Bologna, Edizioni Dehoniane, 2008. 230 p. 14 × 21,5. €33,50

Resseguie, James L., *L'exégèse narrative du Nouveau Testament*. Une introduction. (Le livre et le rouleau 36). Bruxelles, Éditions Lessius, 2009. 351 p. 14,5 × 20,5. €17

Reventlow, Henning Graf – **Hoffman**, Yair (eds.), *Religious Responses to Political Crises in Jewish and Christian Traditions* (Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies 444). New York – London, T & T Clark, 2008. xi-175 p. 16 × 24. £65.00

Rius-Camps, Josep – Read-Heimerdinger, Jenny, *The Message of Acts in Codex Bezae. A Comparison with the Alexandrine Tradition. Volume IV: Acts 18.24 – 28.31: Rome via Ephesus and Jerusalem* (Library of New Testament Studies 415). London – New York, T&T Clark, 2009. xiii-418 p. 15,5 × 23. £70.00

Rochette, Joël, *La rémission des péchés dans l'Apocalypse. Ébauche d'une sotériologie originale* (Tesi Gregoriana, Serie teologia 167). Roma, Editrice Pontificia Università Gregoriana, 2008. 623 p. 17 × 24

Rubel, Georg, *Erkenntnis und Bekenntnis. Der Dialog als Weg der Wissensvermittlung im Johannesevangelium*. (NTAbh 54). Münster, Aschendorff, 2009. xiii-385 p. 16 × 23,5. €59

Ruppert, Lothar, *Genesis. Ein kritischer und theologischer Kommentar. 4. Teilband: Gen 37,1 – 50,26* (FzB 118). Würzburg, Echter Verlag, 2008. 576 p. 15 × 23. €48 – SFr 79,50

Sacchi, Alessandro, *Paolo e i non credenti. Lettera ai Romani 2,14-16.26-29* (Paolo di Tarso 7). Milano, Paoline, 2008. 392 p. 14 × 21,5. €18

Sánchez Navarro, Luís (ed.), *Pablo y Cristo. La centralidad de Cristo en el pensamiento de san Pablo*. Actas del congreso internacional “Pablo y Cristo”, Madrid, 2009. Madrid, Publicaciones San Dámaso, 2009. 281 p. 16,5 × 23

Sancti Hilarii Pictaviensis Episcopi Tractatus super Psalmos. In Psalmos CXIX-CL (CCh Series latina 61 B). Cura et studio J. **Doignon** (†). Turnhout, Brepols Publishers, 2009. (8)-333 p. 15,5 × 25,5. €175

Sandnes, Karl Olav, *The Challenge of Homer. School, Pagan Poets and Early Christianity* (Library of New Testament Studies 400). London – New York, T&T Clark, 2009. xvi-320 p. 16 × 24. £75.00

Saouët, Yves, *Il buon Samaritano* (Itinerari biblici). Brescia, Editrice Queriniana, 2006. 175 p. 13 × 21. €15,50

Schantz, Colleen, *Paul in Ecstasy. The Neurobiology of the Apostle's Life and Thought*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2009. viii-(2)-267 p. 16 × 23,5. £45.00 – \$80.00

Scharfstein, Sol, *Torah and Commentary. The Five Books of Moses. Translation, Rabbinic and Contemporary Commentary*. Jersey City, KTAV Publishing House, 2008. 569 p. 21,5 × 28. \$35.00

Schipper, Jeremy, *Parables and Conflict in the Hebrew Bible*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2009. xiv-168 p. 16 × 23,5. £50.00 – \$85.00

Schmidt, Werner H., *Das Buch Jeremiah. Kapitel 1–20* (ATD 20). Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2008. xviii-340 p. 16,5 × 24

Schüssler, Karlheinz (Hsgr.), *Biblia Coptica. Die koptischen Bibeltexte. Band 4. Das sahidische Alte und Neue Testament. Vollständiges Verzeichnis mit Standorten. Lieferung 1: sa 586-620*. Wiesbaden. Harrassowitz Verlag, 2007. vii-268 p. 9 Tafeln. 21 × 29,5